1: Cooper E-4 (no date) 1946 SH5 Tehuelche SH5
Patagonia SH 1

THE PATAGONIAN AND PAMPEAN HUNTERS

By John M. Cooper

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The section of the Pampa which here interests us (map 1, *Nos. 1D, 1E, 1F;* map 2) extends about 600 miles (960 km.) north to south from about a line between Córdoba and the mouth of the La Plata to a line between the Río Colorado and the Río Negro (pl. 3, *bottom, right;* pl. 4, *top, left*), where Patagonia begins, and thence stretches about 1,000 miles (1,600 km.) from north to south to the Strait of Magellan and the isthmus connecting Brunswick Peninsula with the mainland. The Pampa is a low-lying plain, nowhere over 1,000 feet (305 m.) above sea level, except for the Sierra del Tandil and Sierra de la Ventana in southern Buenos Aires Province. Apart from the low coastal belt, Patagonia is mostly a broken tableland, one to five thousand feet above sea level (pls. 1 and 2).

Average temperatures at Buenos Aires, near the northeastern limit of the Pampa, are 48.9° F. in July, the coldest month, and 73.6° in January, the warmest month; at Choele-Choel, near the border line between the Pampa and Patagonia, 45.° and 75.4°; at Santa Cruz, in far southern Patagonia, 33.2° and 51.6° (cf. New York City, 30.6° in January and 73.5° in July). The Pampa is marked by frequent steady-blowing high winds; Patagonia, by still more frequent blustery violent winds from the west and southwest.

The eastern, or Humid Pampa, is, or was, treeless grassland (pl. 3, *top, right,* and *bottom, left;* pl. 4, *top, right*); the western or Dry Pampa (pl. 3, *top, left*), xerophytic scrub-tree and bush land; most of Patagonia has cover largely like that of the Dry Pampa, but considerable grassland especially in the western part. Along the piedmont and eastern slopes of the Andean Cordillera flanking the Pampa and Patagonia to the west, is a broken forest belt (pl. 4, *bottom, left* and *right*) constituting an extension of the Antarctic flora with its beeches and other characteristic trees and shrubs. (For fuller details on environment, cf.: Jones, 1936; Jones, 1942.)

Of the land fauna, the most important from the native standpoint were the guanaco (*Lama glama guanicoe:* Cabrera and Yepes, 1940,

1: Cooper E-4 (no date) 1946 SH5 Tehuelche SH5
Patagonia SH1
Araucanians SG4

p. 257) and the rhea (*Rhea americana* in the north, *R. darwinii* in the south) (pl. 1). Guanaco more commonly go in small herds consisting of an adult male and 4 to 10 females; sometimes, in small herds of young males; less commonly, in larger herds up to about 100 head, or in ones or twos. Communal hunting was consequently more usual; hunting singly, less so.

THE PATAGONIAN AND PAMPEAN TRIBES

Notwithstanding the notorious complexities and obscurities of Patagonian and Pampean tribal nomenclature and distribution, certain simple broad facts stand out quite clearly, as amply established by the evidence. Since the early 18th century, at least three distinct linguistic families have been determined for the area: *Araucanian*, *Puelchean*, and *Tehuelchean* (*Chon*). The peoples speaking these languages have been quite consistently described as respectively short-statured, fairly tall, and very tall—characterizations borne out by more exact measurements, particularly of the first and third. The cultures, too, of the three peoples can, in spite of much mutual borrowing and much underlying similarity, be readily distinguished—the *Araucanian* versus the *Tehuelche* very clearly, the *Puelche* versus the *Araucanian* and *Tehuelche* less clearly. Taking this well-established broad triple division as a starting point, we can approach more closely the Patagonian-Pampean confusion with less fear of leaving it at the end more confounded that it was; at the worst we can fall back to our starting point.

The Araucanians.—Slight infiltrations of *Araucanian* blood and culture across and down the Andes onto the eastern foothills and plains had taken place during the 17th century, and a little probably even in the 16th. But the major swarming of the *Araucanians* out over Neuquén and the Pampa got under real headway only in the early years of the 18th. The early piñon-eating "*Puelche*" or "*Pehuenche*" of the high cordilleran valleys, who are from time to time mentioned in the Chilean documents of the 16th and 17th centuries, may have been non-*Araucanian* in speech, but there is an even chance that they or a section of them were *Araucanian*-speaking. At any rate, from at least the time of Pietas (1646, p. 499), they were clearly *Araucanian* in speech, and from at least the beginning of the 19th century, they, or the peoples who then lived near where the early *Pehuenche* had lived, were thoroughly *Araucanian* in culture. (Cf. De la Cruz, 1835; Poeppig, 1835–36.)

In view of the foregoing facts, the Argentine *Araucanians* and the early "*Pehuenche-Puelche*" of the cordilleran Araucaria forest will be described in volume 2 of the Handbook, under *Araucanians*, and will be given no further direct treatment in the present article.

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

411
224
136

HUNTING GUANACO AND OSTRICH, VALLEY OF RIO CHICO.

[facing p. iii]

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

tides ebb and flow through these channels renders it im- 133
possible for any vessel not possessed of great steam-power to proceed except the tide is favourable. Our first view of the Straits did not impress me favourably. On either hand the shores looked bleak and barren, though far away to the south and west the mountains of Tierra del Fuego could be distinctly seen. As we anchored early in the afternoon, a descent on the coast of Patagonia was proposed, and a party speedily volunteered—well provided with guns and other arms, for the purposes of sport and self-defence in case of necessity—and were soon in the boat. As the tide was out, the shoal water did not permit us to reach the shore, so we had to wade some two or three hundred yards over beds of sharp-edged mussels, and, after a climb up the steep cliff, found ourselves on the verge of a barren plain which seemed perfectly destitute of life.

After a tramp of some distance we came to the edge of a 136
gully running down to the coast, where finding the torn carcase of a guanaco, we stopped to examine what was to most of us an unknown animal; and our speculations as to the curious hybrid form of the odd-looking 'camel-sheep' were put an end to by the discovery close by of the fresh foot-prints of a puma. These were eagerly tracked, in the hopes of a little entertainment; but after some tedious searching we abandoned the pursuit, and again resuming our excursion, tramped along through high, coarse grass, and sparsely scattered thorny bushes; some of the sportsmen varying the monotony by an occasional shot at a snipe. The day was very genial, the warmth of the bright sunshine was tempered by a wind just cool enough to make a walk pleasant, and the Patagonian climate was pronounced by all hands to be agreeable. Whilst we were beating a rough bit of ground, to our utter amazement and delight our friend the puma jumped out of a bush; but the first surprise was so great, that the opportunity of giving him a long shot was lost. Away we all started in chase, hoping to be able

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

136 to keep him in sight from a small adjacent eminence; and after a good breather two of the party succeeded in viewing him to somewhere near the edge of the cliffs, mainly guided by a retriever dog, which seemed as anxious as anybody to see what the catamount hide was made of. On arriving at the cliff, a seaman observed his tracks on the soft clay of the shelving brow, and soon proclaimed his discovery of the puma in a hole or small cave just below, by the exclamation of 'There he is!' at the same time thrusting the stick he had been beating with nearly into the mouth of the 'lion,' which had set our dog, and appeared about to spring on him. Two shots were fired in quick succession, but apparently without effect, as he made good his retreat, affording us a fine view as he went off, springing in great bounds, along the beach. Pursuit was of course organised, but night being near failed to afford us an opportunity of a closer study of this specimen of the feline race; and we accordingly started again for the ship, after firing a shot or two into the numerous flocks of oyster-catchers and shags which were domiciled on the rocks and about the cliffs. The number of these and other sea-birds was incalculable; the numerous beds of mussels furnishing them with constant food.

133 Next morning we were under weigh with the flood-tide, and rapidly ran through the narrows at a speed of eighteen miles an hour. The scenery on the northern side of the Straits offered little variety until we sighted the Barrancas of San Gregorio, a range of somewhat picturesque hills, rising near the north shore of the bay of the same name, and running along for some miles in an easterly direction. On the southern or Fuegian side of the Straits the land was low for some distance from the coast, and resembled the northern shore, but high mountains were visible in the background. After passing the second narrows, an hour or two's run with the flood-tide and a good head of steam brought us opposite to the 'Island of San Isabel,' or Elizabeth Island; after passing which, the snow clad peaks of Mount Sarmiento, in

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

The Pampa we were now traversing presented an expanse 133
of undulating or rolling plains covered with a uniform growth of coarse grass interspersed with barberry bushes, and occasional lagoons in the hollows. No living creatures except ourselves appeared on the waste. To the westward the snow-clad peaks of the mountains bordering the Sarmiento Straits greeted us with an icy blast which made my thoughts longingly revert to the cozy cabin and my late shipmates, who were, no doubt, threading the intricacies of its channels. But the good guanaco mantle kept out the wind, and our motley party pushed briskly on in good order. Lieutenant Gallegos has been already introduced; as to the 122
others, J'aria was a small man, of rough exterior, of doubtful extraction, and more than doubtful antecedents, who looked fit for any business except good; but he served me most assiduously and with unlooked-for care. The soldier was a fine-looking fellow, new to the Pampas, whose carbine, which he duly carried, proved a source of great embarrassment to him; and his horse being by no means too manageable, he was considerably bothered, much to the delight of the rest. Two others were hybrids, between gauchos and sailors, having, like our marines, been equally accustomed to service *per mare, per terram;* but, like the jollies, they were unmistakably useful and good men. The last of the party was of the J'aria type. All were well mounted, and provided with a spare horse. We carried for provisions biscuit, charqui or dried meat, roasted wheat meal, and coffee and sugar, and were furnished with an unusual but welcome luxury, a small tent, underneath which we cared little for the bitter frost outside.

After riding over the Pampas for three or four hours, we 135
encamped for the night in a bollow by the side of a lagoon, having selected a suitable spot for pitching the tent on the sheltered slope, well out of the sweep of the wind. The lagoon was covered with black-necked swans and other wild 136
fowl; so, as soon as the horses had been unloaded and looked

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

Though rough and rainy, morning broke fair and the sun rose bright and warm, so we started, following a path along the base of the before-mentioned range of hills until about ten o'clock, when, just after passing a beautiful little stream where I noticed fish darting about in the pools, a herd of guanaco, hitherto concealed by a small eminence, came into view. Chase was immediately given, but most of our horses were soon blown, and Gallegos, the soldier, and myself having ascended the hills over which the herd had taken flight, as it appeared useless to continue the chase, stopped on the crest and watched the animals as they streamed up on an opposite hill. One of the party was missing, and suddenly an exclamation from the Lieutenant, 'What is it?' caused us to turn our eyes in the direction to which he pointed, where some fancied they descried a man. The idea of deserters immediately occurred to their minds, so they started off, asking me to tell J'aria (who had remained with the horses) to travel on to a given spot at the head of the valley. Having descended the hill, which was tunnelled with burrows
[136] of the Ctenomys Magellanicus,* the crowns of which, yielding to the horses' tread, proved a series of dangerous traps, I rejoined J'aria, and we pursued our way for a few miles until we reached a small lagoon at the head of the valley, covered with thousands of widgeon and duck. The sight suggested the thought that no man need starve in this country, so abundant seemed the supplies of animal life. Here we waited, and in the course of half an hour the remainder came up with their horses blown, one of the party having a piece of guanaco meat hanging to his saddle. This was José Marinero, one of the hybrids, who had succeeded in lassoing a guanaco, at which he appeared intensely delighted. The 'man,' as I had previously supposed, proved imaginary. I regretted not being up at the death, as it turned out that José had been close to us, but hidden from sight by a rise. After a pleasant and refreshing rest and a draught of café

* Cunningham, p. 135.

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

one another hunt the party overtook the deserters, housed in the toldo of an Indian, and a fight ensued, ending in the death of one of the pursuers; the deserter who shot him was pistolled, and J'aria and José carried the dead body of their comrade on horseback to the settlement, sixty miles distant, proceeding without a halt all through the night, and accomplishing their ghastly journey by the next morning. J'aria related how he had been drifted in a launch among the ice in the Straits, and carried over to Tierra del Fuego, where they found rocks so magnetic that iron nails adhered to them. He further amused us by a short dissertation on his domestic arrangements; how, when his last wife died, he married a Chilote to be mother for his children and wife for him, and he always called her in conversation the 'Madre Mayor'—wife mother.

[33] Next morning we started early, and varying our march
•[36] with one or two races after foxes, which generally met their death in a very short time, and an engagement with a female puma, which one of the men despatched by a splendid revolver shot through the head, traversed some uneven Pampas, with occasional hills, and arrived at the descent of the valley of the Rio Gallegos, where the very remarkable bench formation, afterwards observed on a smaller or larger scale in other Patagonian rivers, first arrested my attention. To the west, some miles away, a high hill, apparently of basalt, the square summit of which, with seemingly regular walls and towers, mimicked the distant view of an extensive fortress, served as a landmark for the break in the terraces, which formed a natural road, by which we reached the first or upper bench, a mile and a half in width; from this a deep or steeped slope of fifty feet and upwards descended to another terrace or plain of equal extent, and terminating in another fall, at the bottom of which lay the bed of the river; it is fordable in the summer months, I believe, in many places, but when we crossed the water about reached where one's saddle flaps would be if riding on

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SHS Tehuelche SHS

an English rabbit. After crossing the ford, a halt took place [33]
to smoke a pipe, whilst doing which we watched the gyrations of a large vulture of the condor species; he hovered [36]
for some time, and at length boldly settled on a point of rock about a hundred yards distant; so the soldier, whose carbine was always ready, took a shot, but missed, much to the grief of Gallegos, who asserts that the heart of the vulture is a good remedy for certain diseases. We then [37]
mounted, and riding about a mile halted for the night by a spring, gushing out of a ravine in the slope between the upper and lower benches, where the pasture was good, as Juan declared that water was scarce for some leagues further on. The horses arranged, José and myself proceeded to try and shoot a guanaco, but the plain was too open, so, after lighting up a bit of dry grass to attract any neighbouring Indians, we very foolishly indulged in a bathe in the river. The water was intensely cold, and the ill effects of this ill-timed indulgence were felt for a long time after. The soldier meanwhile was away on horseback, chasing a large herd, but he returned about dusk empty-handed. Next morning we started about nine o'clock, having been, as usual, delayed by the horses having strayed some distance. Ascending the slope, we crossed the higher bench, a barren, dreary waste, for about a league, until we came to a lagoon covered with upland grass, and lying just below what may be termed the barrancas of the Upper Pampa. Halting here for a smoke and warm to dispel the effects of the intensely cold wind, we were about resuming our route to ascend the stony slope of the upper plains, when large columns of smoke, in answer to [38]
the signal fire we had left behind us, rose up in the sky in a N.E. direction. We moved on, and arriving at the summit of the ascent, looked eagerly round for signs of the fire, but nothing was visible. The plains lay before us apparently destitute of life, excepting a stray guanaco here and there. Juan then set light to a neighbouring bush, which gave out dense clouds of black smoke, and in a few minutes this was

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

dark peaty earth was generally to be found, and the surface of the Pampas had assumed a more desolate appearance, being strewn with small pebbles, and studded with bushes—generally of a thorny species. Round clumps of prickly thistles—which burn like tinder on applying a lighted match—and a few stray tufts of withered grass, only made more desolate the hungry barrenness of the deserts, over which the wind blew with cutting violence, yet they are the home of large herds of guanaco, ostriches, puma, and armadillo, though the latter were at this period comfortably hybernating.

Next morning no horses were visible, and as time went on till ten o'clock without any appearance we all began to suspect Indian treachery. Sam volunteered the remark that if they (the Indians) had played us such a trick, he would go and clear all their animals out the following evening. This threat there was fortunately no occasion for him to put into execution, as the troop proved only to have strayed into another valley. As we were now nearing Santa Cruz, which the last of the Indians were just leaving, having completed their trade and finished all the grog, we saw numerous columns of smoke, caused by their hunting parties. After passing the broken ground and reaching the high Pampa, Sam and myself rode on ahead, amusing ourselves by fruitlessly chasing guanaco or ostrich, but Sam's dexterity with the bolas was frustrated by his being mounted on a horse belonging to the expedition and unused to this work. Towards evening, after again passing numerous salt lagoons, we came to a descent of 300 or 400 feet leading to a valley containing a large salina, and halting, made our fire by the side of a spring, near which, Sam informed me, were the graves of two Indians, which he mentioned with the deepest respect and in an awe-stricken undertone.

Our signal smoke, which was so much to attract Indians as to give the direction of our route to Gallegos and J'aris, was soon responded to from the opposite hills on the northern

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

expedition, was to be had in abundance by ascending the river. At the present time the knowledge of the navigation of the Straits would make it much easier and cheaper to import timber from Punta Arena than to send lumberers into the Cordillera and raft the timber down to Santa Cruz.

Near the Potrero, on the southern shore, there is a natural salt lake or salina, which must have been overlooked by the Beagle expedition, as Mr. Darwin fixes the southern limits of salinas at Port St. Julian. In the summer, and until the winter rains and snow set in, an inexhaustible supply of excellent salt can be obtained. It is at present worked only to furnish, besides the salt for home use, what is required for the annual sealing fishery; but if labour were more abundant, the salt would be found to be a valuable article of export to the Falkland Islands; the salina being situated less than half a mile from the beach, where there is good anchorage.

The river[1] also yields abundant supplies of fish—a species of bass and others—which when cured keep well: some which had been cured over a year proved excellent. These might be profitably exported to Rio Janeiro, &c., where cured fish are always in demand.

Notwithstanding these natural advantages, Santa Cruz could hardly at this period be considered a settlement. Subsequently to my visit, two Frenchmen from Buenos Ayres proposed to try sheep farming in the valley, but with what result I have not heard. As already mentioned, the station existed as a depôt for sealing, and as a trading post, to which the Tehuelches resorted to exchange their ostrich feathers, and puma, guanaco, and ostrich skins, for tobacco, sugar, ammunition, and above all, rum. There was little or no trade going on during the absence of the schooner, as all the stores had been exhausted; but after the summer campaign some of the Tehuelches invariably resort thither, and the vicinity has always been a favourite winter quarters. The missionaries, Messrs. Schmid and Hart, endeavoured to avail themselves of this opportunity for essaying the conversion

[1] [i.e. Santa Cruz River --Andyst]

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

These, eastwards, lose their elevations, and merge into the undulations of the high Pampa and a rolling cheerless waste of stones, coarse grass, and incense bushes; its uneven surface often traversed by ravines running in various directions. Amongst these hills there is a large lagoon which Casimiro informed me he used to visit whilst residing with the missionaries for the purpose of procuring wild fowl, of which there were then great numbers, but they had latterly given up this resort. There are other lagoons scattered at intervals in the before-mentioned plains, which, during the winter, were frozen, and the beautifully smooth ice often caused Mr. Clarke and myself to long for a pair of skates; indeed we tried to manufacture a pair, but without success. 133 [136]

Towards the sea coast from the Blue Hills the slope appears gradual, until nearing the coast, when the plain is intersected by gullies and deep fertile valleys, which render hunting very tedious work, as it is necessary to trust almost entirely to the dogs. Game abounds in this direction, especially during the winter. We made numerous excursions up river, generally staying away from the settlement three or four days, our favourite rendezvous being a place about sixty miles distant, called 'Chickrookaik,' marked by Fitzroy as an Indian Ford or Pass of the river Santa Cruz, which statement both El Sourdo and Casimiro confirmed. At this point the river narrows considerably, and on the south side there are steep cliffs almost overhanging the water, a cave in which cliffs was always a sure find for a puma. Both above and below this point are large wide plains extending from the 'banks' or cliffs to the river, which may easily be encircled; and the game being hemmed in between the horsemen and the river are readily captured. Sometimes the ostriches take to the water, but in the winter this saves trouble, as their legs get frozen, and on landing they are unable to move. We made an excursion on one occasion some miles higher up the river, and found abundance of game. We had previously on our road had good luck, 133 136

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

133 but, as is often the custom, left the slain animals concealed
136 in bushes, with a poncho or something over them. During the interval of our absence severe weather set in, and on returning to examine our *caches* the foxes and birds of prey had accounted for the meat. The foxes are a great trouble to the hunters, as, frequently, whilst they are encircling the herds of guanaco, and taking the greatest care to keep out of sight, one of these brutes will jump up, the dogs give chase, and then good-bye to all chance of sport. Fitzroy remarked the number of guanaco bones found in his ascent of the river Santa Cruz, which appear to have puzzled him,
[30] but the cause is not far to seek. During the very severe winters which occur I believe about once in three years, these animals, finding no pasture on the high lands, which are covered with snow, are necessarily driven down to the plains fringing the river, where they die from starvation. There is also a disease prevalent amongst them something similar to scab in sheep. On one occasion a hunting party killed ten guanacos, all of which were scabby, or, as we called it, 'sancoso;' and, consequently, unfit for food. Mr. Clarke told me that after one severe winter he found ostriches lying in heaps, dead under the bushes, and also guanacos. The difficulty of getting the horses across the swift and deep stream, with its banks encumbered by ice, prevented us from making frequent excursions to the northern side of the river. A level plain extends from the banks for about a mile, bounded by a chain of irregular hills; near the foot of these I picked up many specimens of a spiral shell, apparently a Turritella, which appeared to have been vitrified; and some were as translucent as glass, and of different colours. Beyond these hills rolled a succession of uneven plains diversified by ridges and hills; the general slope of the ground being apparently from west to east, and the hills towards the west often assumed the form of abrupt lofty cliffs. Near a laguna at the foot of a cliff a hundred feet high I found boulders incrusted with sulphate of iron, such as had been

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

pointed out to me in the Falklands, and numerous oyster shells and other marine shells occured in various localities. There are no streams, but frequent lagoons in the hollows, and surrounded by a luxuriant growth of incense bushes. The unbroken plains abound in round thistle, califate, and the curious shrub called 'ratstail,' from the appearance of its twigs when the thick bark is pulled off. When burned it emits a dense black resinous smoke. To the north the horizon is bounded by a lofty range of hills which form the barrier of the valley of the Rio Chico, about sixty miles distant. These northern hills abound with puma, some of which, killed in our hunts, were of unusual size, measuring fully six feet exclusive of the tail, which is generally half the length of the body. They are, of course, most numerous where the herds of guanaco and the ostriches abound; in the southern part of Patagonia their colour is more of a greyish-brown than that of the species found in the Argentine Provinces. These 'Leones,' as they are universally called in South America, always appeared to me to be the most cat-like of all the felidæ. They are very timid, always running from a man on horseback, and, by day at least, from a pedestrian; they run for a short distance in a series of long bounds, at great speed, but soon tire and stand at bay behind or in the midst of a bush, and sitting upon their haunches, spit and swear just like a monstrous tabby; sometimes endeavouring to scratch with their formidable claws, but rarely springing at the purswer. Mr. Clarke on one occasion had his mantle torn off in this manner. At another time, when hunting in the vicinity of Santa Cruz, I observed from a distance Gonzalez hacking with his knife at a big incense bush, and on reaching the spot found him occupied in clearing away branches to allow him to knock a huge puma on the head with his bolas. He was dismounted and attended by his dogs, which bayed the animal. Still, had the puma not been a cur, he could doubtless have sprung out and killed or severely wounded the gaucho.

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

136 The Indians affirm that the puma will attack a single man alone and on foot, and, indeed, subsequently, an example of this came under my notice; however, if a person should be benighted or lost, he has only to take the precaution of lighting a fire, which these animals will never approach. They are most savage in the early part of the spring or breeding season, when, according to my experience, they are found roaming over the country in an unsettled manner; they are then also thinner than at other times, but, like the wild horse, they are generally pretty fat at all times of the year. The females I saw were sometimes accompanied by two cubs, but never more. The meat of the puma resembles pork, and [262] is good eating, though better boiled than roasted, but one or two Indians of my acquaintance would not touch the meat. 281 The hide is useful either for saddle-cloths or to make 136 mantles of; and owing to its greasy nature it can be softened with less trouble than that of the guanaco. In Santa Cruz one of the men had a pair of trousers made of lion's skin, which worn with the hair side out was impervious to wet. From the hock and lower part of the hind legs boots may be constructed similar to those made from horse hide, and in common use amongst the Indians and also the gauchos of Plata. These, however, are only made from pumas of large size, and they wear out very quickly. To 224 kill a puma with a gun is rather a difficult matter, as, unless the ball enters his skull, or strikes near the region of the heart, he has as many lives as his relation the cat. I once put three revolver bullets into one, and ultimately had recourse to the bolas as a more effective weapon. When wounded they become very savage, but they are at all times bad customers for dogs, which they maul in a shocking manner. The Indian dogs are trained to stand off and bay them, keeping out of range of the claws; nevertheless they not unfrequently get killed. Perhaps the simplest way of taking the pumas, is to throw a lazo over them, as directly they feel the noose they lie down as if dead, and are easily dea-

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

133 We formed another hunt, in which numerous ostriches and several pumas were killed. From the western side of the plateau we overlooked a large plain, extending to the immediate vicinity of the mountains, but near the side of which there appeared to be a cutting or steep descent, just like a railway embankment. As it had been announced in the cacique's address that we were to encamp near a spring on the eastern side, and I had killed an ostrich, which, after giving a sharp run of half a mile, had been turned by the cavalcade of women, I proceeded in company with Casimiro and another to have some dinner. We accordingly selected a bush, cooked and ate our bird, and at the conclusion of our meal mounted and proceeded to where we expected to find the encampment. But, arriving at the spot, we found nobody, and looking over the plain we caught a glimpse of a belated woman just vanishing down the cutting above mentioned. We accordingly followed, and an hour's gallop brought us up with the remainder. The sun had set, but the light of a young moon enabled us to make our way to the second bench. I may say the formation altogether much resembled that of the river Cuheyli; but the river which flowed in this valley was of small size, although, as we found, the banks were boggy and almost impracticable. The moon had by this time set, and after a considerable deal of confusion in the dark, all got across, and night being far advanced encamped about a mile to the northward. When daylight enabled us to examine the locality, we found ourselves in a valley walled in by lofty abrupt cliffs on both sides, while a stream—bordered by marshes, containing numerous snipe
[134] and teal—flowed swiftly down the centre of the glen. To the north the valley appeared to bend westwards, so having nothing to do, I strolled up to the turn and found that the high cliffs ceased, and were replaced by the ordinary steep barrancas, covered from the top to the bottom with incense-bushes. The valley nowhere exceeded a mile in width, and the gloom and oppressive effect of the prison-like walls of

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

252 In the hunt not less than
pumas were killed, which were, as usual at this time, very fat, and were duly boiled in the iron pots, furnishing an excellent supper, the meat closely resembling boiled pork.
576 During the day seven of the Chilians were missed, and on our arrival at the toldos, it transpired that they had determined to try and find their own way to the Chupat settlement; and as they had left in an underhand manner, which the Indians look upon as tantamount to a declaration of war, some of the people wished to pursue and kill them, but this
133 proposition was overruled by Orkeke and Casimiro. The en-
● [136] campment was sheltered by a hill named 'Téle,' close to a large lagoon covered with waterfowl, into which flowed a beautiful spring issuing from the hill; along the margin of the clear pure water grew a profusion of a sort of green cress, and at sunset flights of flamingoes (Phœnicopterus tŭnipallo) and rose-coloured spoonbills (Platalea ajaja) came to the lagoon to feed. One day's hunting was done in the surrounding plain, which to the west presents several of the remarkable drops, or basin-like formations described by Darwin as existing on the eastern side of the Cordillera. On October 5th we broke up the camp and marched in a northerly direction, until a stream of considerable size was arrived at; this some of us crossed at once, although it was deep and the banks rotten and unsound. The women and remainder of the party diverged to a ford, old Orkeke sending one of the Chilians to take care that his little dog (on whom he lavished his paternal affections) did not get wet. In half an hour's time the whole party—Ako included—had crossed in safety, and the camp was pitched on a peninsula between this river and another which joined it lower down. The united streams may or may not form a tributary of the Chupat, as the Indians disagreed on this point, some averring it to be so, others stating that the river flowed into a large lagoon. The weather had changed into drizzling rain, and the wet and sloppy state of the toldos was very disagreeable. It
291 did not, however, much affect our clothing, as it is easy to

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

employed to stroll about and practise. Besides their use, my practical training had enabled me soon to acquire the art of manufacturing them, and our many idle hours were employed in plaiting ostrich sinews, so that I contrived to fit up an extensive assortment, some of which I used to barter for tobacco. The weather during our stay here became worse, rain, sleet, and gales of wind prevailing; and the toldos, from the continuous rain and the marshy nature of the ground, became so wet and wretched as to be almost uninhabitable, so that we marched on the 16th over a level pampa—smoke to the eastward being observed and duly answered during the journey. We encamped at night on the north side of a small rapid stream, in a place called 'Pelwecken,' situated a league from the wooded river, the trees of which were visible from the encampment. I here saw a new game played [525] by the Indians which resembled that known amongst schoolboys as 'knucklebones,' being played with small stones in lieu of the bones, and heavy stakes were lost and won on the chances. On Sunday, the 17th, the Indians started to hunt in the vicinity of the wooded river, and Casimiro proposed that I should accompany him to the woods to cut poles for the toldos, and timber for working saddles. Orkeke, however, for some reason or another, recommended me to stay quietly in the toldos; and as advice is sometimes almost the same as a command, I acquiesced, although longing to enjoy a close view of a tree again after so much wandering over the treeless pampas. As the day was warm and fine, I strolled down the river in search of the eggs of the upland goose [134] (Chloephaga magellanica), yellow-billed goose (Cygnus coscoroba), and other water fowl, and returned about two P.M. with plenty of spoil. The women were superintending the [578] cooking of some of these, when one of them rushed into the toldo and cried out that the Indians were returning and a fight had taken place. A glance at the coming horsemen was at once sufficient to convince us that she was right. They came galloping back by twos and threes, swords drawn,

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

578 mantles hanging off their shoulders, and their faces glowing with fury. They at once proceeded to get their guns and revolvers to renew the fight. Orkeke, however, arrived and made a long speech, and ultimately quiet was restored. One man—a brother of Camillo—had been killed and left on the pampa. The sister of the deceased was frantic at his death, and, arming herself with a knife, attempted to avenge him; but she was soon stopped, disarmed and quieted. The deceased was armed with a six-shooter, and his assailant had only a sword; one shot missed him and the next barrel missed fire, whereupon he closed and ran his adversary through the body. Casimiro returned shortly after the remainder, and when he heard of the fight and the result, was for some time eager to renew it and avenge the slain man, who was a relation of his own, but at last yielded to Orkeke's arguments.

580 The following day the smoke to the east appeared pretty close, and, when we had marched on a little, two young men were despatched in its direction with private instructions from Orkeke, and we proceeded to the wooded river, where we luxuriated for a short time under the shade of a description of birch tree, and then forded the stream, which is of considerable width and very rapid. The Indians declared

136 that it was impossible for any man to swim across the river in the deeper portion below the ford, on account of some ferocious beasts which they termed water tigers—'Tigres de l'agua'—which would certainly attack and devour any one in the water. They described them as yellow quadrupeds, larger than puma. It is certain that two ostriches, which, being too poor for use, had been left on the bank, were found by us next day in the shallow water, torn and half-devoured, and the tracks of an animal resembling those of a large puma were plainly visible leading down to the water; but a puma invariably drags its prey to a bush; and, though jaguar will take the water readily, I have never known one devour its prey except on land, nor, as far as I know, are they found so far south. The animal may be a species of the

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

large brown otter, with orange-coloured fur on the breast, found in the Parana; but the Indians' account is curious as bearing on the name of the lake—'Nahuel Huapi,' or Tigers' Island. It is possible that the aguarra found in the valley of the Rio Negro may also haunt these districts. They further told me that stags had been seen on the banks of the river, but none were heard of during our stay in the neighbourhood. A few miles below the ford the belt of trees ceases, and on the southern side there is a peculiar group of what seem to be square-shaped rocks, which at a distance have very much the appearance of a small town regularly built and walled. This is called by the Indians 'Sengel,' and was the scene of a great fight between the Tehuelches and Araucanos many years ago, relics of which in the shape of bones and skulls still whiten the plain. After crossing the river, the two young men who had been sent back returned, bringing with them three horses belonging to the Chilians and one man of their party, who, incredible as it seems, had assisted the Indians to dismount and disable his companions. The particulars of the fate of the others were not divulged, though a story was current that some of them had managed to reach the Chupat. I asked no questions, but the blood-stained knife of one of the young men told its own story. This day all the Indians rode on in silence, the last two days' events having roused all their bad passions. I rode alone, feeling that there was danger in the air, and near our halting-place joined Orkeke and two others at a fireside for the purpose of cooking some ostrich eggs, which we were busily discussing when a messenger came to say that Casimiro was waiting to see me at a spot which he indicated. I mounted and rode off accordingly, but had not gone far before the two braves who had been commissioned to do for the Chilians galloped up, one from either side, one brandishing his sword and the other swinging his bolas. I at once put spurs to my horse, and my mantle flying back discovered two revolvers belted round my waist underneath it. They checked their career

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

speed of our horses to while away the interval; and when the women appeared, proceeded to the chase, over a pampa formed by a bend in the range of hills. During the hunt we found the carcase of a guanaco, which had been killed by a puma, carefully covered up in grass and scrub. It was a fat animal, such as the puma always singles out, although I have read in some accounts that he follows the herds and picks up the weakly ones. That this is not the case was proved on various occasions, by finding the carcases left by these cats, which were always those of animals in good condition. Early in the afternoon we arrived at the encampment, by the side of a small river, flowing in an easterly direction from the hills. The women, with the exception of one or two, were not present, and might be seen about two miles off, grubbing up a description of potato which grew in the neighbouring hill side. The day was warm, and Orkeke invited me to go to the top of one of the hills to see if any smoke or signs of Indians were visible. We accordingly crossed the stream, and while riding along the northern bank I observed fish swimming lazily on the top of the water. After crossing a marshy patch of ground, we ascended the hills, and dismounting near a bank of blue earth, climbed on foot to the summit, which was composed of a description of quartz, with crystalline veins running through it. Scrambling up this formation, we arrived at the top, whence we had a beautiful view of the encampment and the green pasture bordering the stream. To the northward the view was rather shut in by hills rising to a considerable elevation. Just below us lay a valley, in which several guanaco and ostriches were taking their evening meal. We remained here for some time smoking and enjoying the face of nature generally, but could discern no smoke or signs of Indians. Orkeke remarked that the pasture had a fresher appearance lower down the course of the stream, and proposed that we should inspect it. We accordingly descended from our elevated position, mounted, and proceeded to the valley below; in our descent

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

being lucky enough to kill a fat male ostrich, which was sit- 133
ting on a nest of twenty-four eggs. We investigated the grass, which was of good quality; and after an *al fresco* meal, in which we were joined by Tehang, returned to the toldos, where the women had just arrived with a considerable supply of potatoes. I again, on our way back, observed fish in the 136
stream, so, turning my horse adrift, proceeded to extract my hooks and line from the baggage under the charge of Mrs. Orkeke. After a little delay all was ready; a piece of meat supplied the place of fly as bait; and dropping it gently into the pool, I soon had a bite, and pulled out a fish about two pounds weight, of the perch class, similar to that called dorado in the River Plate. After half an hour's fishing I landed several others as large, and as it was nearly dark, returned to supper off fried fish and boiled potatoes.

I had no opportunity of seeing the plants which produced 137
these tubers, but they exactly resembled those I afterwards obtained in the northern country from a plant, the feathery fern-like leaf of which springs from a long slender stem. The following day we shifted camp down river, to the neigh- 000
bourhood of the green pasture, and found large quantities of the eggs of the upland geese, ducks, &c. In the neighbourhood one lonely tree grew by the side of the stream, although the banks were lined with driftwood, probably carried down by the wooded slopes of the Cordillera, ten miles farther west, during floods. This day, smoke having been distinctly seen to the northward, Hummums was despatched to ascertain whether it were a signal from the much-looked-for Northern Indians. Three days subsequently, about nine in 6/9
the evening, whilst I was lying dreaming of home, and had just—in dreamland—taken a glass of sherry, Orkeke woke me up with the intelligence that fires were to be seen to the north, which were no doubt caused by the 'chasqui' or messenger previously despatched. In about three hours' time —somewhere about midnight—Casimiro, Hummums, and another Indian rode into the camp, and our toldo was soon

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

be seen a party of young men playing at ball, in another a 517
man breaking a colt, and down by the side of the stream
groups of girls bathing, or wandering in the swamps picking [137]
the wild spinach, which grew all along the margin of the
water in great quantities. One day I went on an excursion 252
with the children to pluck spinach and plunder the nests of
wild ducks and upland geese, from which we returned laden
with spoil, and in the evening a stew, *à la* Tehuelche, was
made with ostrich grease, spinach, and eggs, which combina-
tion was universally approved of. Another day we went
fishing, and after catching several with a hook and line,
voted it slow work, so contrived a net by sewing two ponchos
together, and waded into the stream dragged the shallow
parts, and, notwithstanding the duck-weed, which rather
impeded us, made several good hauls, the take consisting [134
of the perch-like fish and a black species of cat-fish: the 265]
Indians, however, except Casimiro, would not eat the fish,
and evidently regarded my enjoyment of them much as an
Englishman would at first view their appreciation of blood.
Another day we went on an expedition to dig up a species 222
of root somewhat resembling a parsnip, but although we
grubbed about for an hour our efforts were only scantily
rewarded by a few small roots, which were given to the
children. One roasted in the ashes, at Mrs. Orkeke's invita-
tion I tasted, and found it rather tasteless and insipid.

During our stay in this pleasant resting-place the weather 512
was bright and sunny, and on calm days warm, and the
absence of rain almost made it appear like summer; but
whenever the west wind blew, the piercing cold dispelled the
passing illusion. The long delay which was necessary to
recruit our horses, in anticipation of a campaign against
the young guanaco and the wild cattle, was most acceptable
to all the members of our party; and after the two preceding
months of quarrels, real and suspected dangers, and forced
marches, our present peaceable existence, though devoid of
adventure, was thoroughly enjoyable. An occasional hunting

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

177 party, who set out in 1777 from Rio Bueno, and marched to
538 Lake Llanquechue, crossed the passes of the Cordillera, under Osorno, and passed the night near the snow line. They heard distant artillery, and beheld the head of a great Laguna on the eastern side; they brought back the astounding intelligence that two distinct towns existed, one peopled by a race of Spanish origin, the Auca-Huincas, at war with the Tehuelches; and the other by Englishmen, or More-Huincas, who lived in amity with the Indians. And the Fiscal of Chili, in his report, insisted strongly on the necessity of rooting out those audacious islanders who had dared to plant themselves in the dominions of 'our Lord the King.' Just as the jealous fear of the encroaching English were thus mixed up in the Spanish version of the mysterious Cesares, so the Indians connected them with the traditionary glories of the great Inca race, and spoke of the Indian Cesares; and the potency of the fable was shown by a proclamation put forth by the heroic and ill-starred Tupac Amaru, who headed the unsuccessful rebellion against the tyrant Christians in 1781, styling himself 'Inca, Señor de los Cesares y Amazonas, con dominio en el Gran Paytiti.' But success mocked his grasp, and he perished by the hand of the executioner, just as the rich and coveted city whose lordship he claimed has eluded many an explorer who has sacrificed his life in the hopeless search. But the patient reader is probably weary of enchanted cities, and glad to return to the daily routine of our Indian life, though it was at this time
224 boisterly enough. It was the all-important season of young guanaco hunting; and though the chase afforded plenty of riding, it could hardly be said to offer sport; but to the Indians it was a matter of business, as their clothing and stock of skins to trade with depended on the number of young guanaco killed at this time. Some notes of the habits
136 of the guanaco and rhea, or ostrich, which furnish the Patagonian Indians with food and clothing, may not be out of place, though all critics are warned that they are not those

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

of a naturalist, but simply the observations of a lover of birds and beasts.

The guanaco, known to the Indians as 'Non,' is from three to four feet in height, and from four to five in length, measured from the point of the muzzle to the tail. The coat is woolly, but decreases in thickness of wool, or rather becomes hairy, about the head and legs. Its colour is of a yellowish red, intermixed with white in various parts of the body; more especially under the abdomen, down the inside of the legs, and round the lips and cheeks: the white also extends up the inside of the neck and throat. The shoulder is slightly arched; the tail short, and when the animal is in motion slightly elevated. The guanaco abounds over a vast range of country, extending from Peru all down the regions east of the range of the Cordilleras of the Andes, over the vast plains from Mendoza to the Straits of Magellan, and even to Tierra del Fuego. As a rule, one male guanaco herds with a troop of about a hundred females, and in the event of their being disturbed he will take up his position on some neighbouring pinnacle of rock, and commence neighing something after the fashion of a horse, keeping himself between the danger and his wives. At the breeding season, however, the males go in flocks by themselves, as do the females. Although it is stated in Monsieur Gay's admirable book on the *Zoology of Chili*, that the females sometimes bear three fawns, yet this must be a rare case: while we were hunting and killing the young guanaco, the mothers invariably became separated, the young ones lagging behind so as to prevent any appropriation of them to their dams. However, during the time employed in killing the mothers, for the purpose of extracting the unborn young from the womb, I never saw or heard of more than one foetus being found. The guanaco are excessively swift of foot, indeed almost unapproachable by horse or dog, as a few bush leaps take them away far beyond the speed of a horse. They frequently wait to allow a pursuer to approach close, and

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SHS Tehuelche SHS

● 136 them bound off, and speedily distance him. Their means of defence consist chiefly in the mouth, or use of the feet, more especially the fore ones, although they also bite at times, and with their two powerful canine teeth could inflict a severe wound.* I have seen places where a puma and a guanaco have evidently had a severe struggle, always, however, resulting in the victory of the puma, as, on seeing these marks, we invariably searched for and found the body near, carefully covered over by the "leaves." The flesh of the guanaco is excellent, something resembling mutton; the young guanaco being more like very tender veal. That their wool might be turned to account for mercantile purposes is undoubted, as it is of very fine texture, and is at the present time of value in Chili, where it is woven into ponchos which are highly prized. Up to the present time few have been domesticated, but they become very tame, and might at a future date be found useful as beasts of burden, as they are similar in most respects to the lama. There is one very remarkable point about the guanaco; at certain times of the year a sort of secretion, condensed into a hard substance like stone, is found in round pieces, varying from a quarter to half an inch in diameter, in the stomach. To these stones some of the Indians attribute medicinal virtues. The guanaco is of use to the Indians in every way. The skin of the adult is used to make the coverings of the bolas, and that of the calves or young ones to make mantles for clothes; the sinews of the back furnish them with thread; the skin of the neck, which is particularly tough and durable, with bone or thongs for bolas, bridles, &c., &c. The skin of the back supplies them with shoes or coverings for the bolas; from the thigh bone they also cut out flutes, or make a musical instrument. On attaining the age of about two months, the coat of the young guanaco begins to become woolly, and the skin is then useless for mantles, but makes sufficiently good saddle-cloths.

* The skull of a guanaco is well figured in Mr. Cunningham's work.

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

saddle-cloths. The animal at this early age is very swift of foot, and will give a good chase. They attain their full size the second or third year after birth, and the adult male cannot be better described than as apostrophised by Lieut. Gallegos. As we watched a solitary guanaco standing on a hill above us, and every now and then uttering its shrill warning neigh, 'Ah,' said Gallegos, 'you are a queer animal; you have the neigh of a horse, the wool of a sheep, the neck of a camel, the feet of a deer, and the swiftness of the devil.' The Rhea Darwinii, called by the Indians 'Mekyush,' and by the Spaniards Avestrus or Ostrich, which name is universally applied to it, is peculiar to Patagonia, few being met with north of Rio Negro, and none being found that I am aware of in any other part of the globe; with the exception, perhaps, of the more northern and plain-like parts of Tierra del Fuego, opposite the country extending from Cape Virgin to Oxry Harbour. It is a variety of the Rhea Americana, common in the Argentine provinces of Entre Rios and Santa Fé, also scattered over the Republic of the Banda Oriental, and extending, I believe, as far north as Rio Grande do Sul and the southern Brazilian provinces. They exist also in Chili, on the plains at the foot of the Cordillera of the Andes. The chief difference between these two species is that the Patagonian Rhea Darwinii is smaller and of lighter colour than the American Rhea. The Patagonian ostriches are very swift of foot, and run with their wings closed, while the other species invariably spread theirs. The former birds also always run in a straight line, except when leaving the nest, when probably, to avoid being tracked, they run in a circuitous manner. Their plumage, that is to say the wing feathers, are an object of commerce, and fetch at present about a dollar a pound in Buenos Ayres. The marrow from the leg bones is also, I believe, of use for making pomade, and was formerly, if not at present, highly prized in Buenos Ayres. To the Indian this bird is invaluable in many ways. Besides furnishing their most favourite

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

[24] food, from the sinews of the leg thongs for bolas are constructed; the neck is used as a pouch for salt or tobacco; the feathers are exchanged for tobacco and other necessaries; the grease from the breast and back is tried out and secured in bags formed of the skin (taken off during the spring season, when the females, like all the Patagonian animals except the puma, are thin); the meat is more nourishing and more relished by the Indians than that of any other animal in the country, and the eggs form a staple commodity of food during the months of September, October, and November. The male bird stands about two feet and a
[25] half high, and is to be distinguished from the female by its being of a slightly darker colour, and of greater size and strength; nevertheless, it requires a practised eye to detect the difference at any distance. The male bird is also swifter. Their usual food consists of short grass and the seeds of various shrubs, but more especially of tender grass, which I have on several occasions watched them plucking, from a convenient rock which hid me from their sight. On being alarmed they immediately set off at a great speed; they possess great powers of eyesight. If met or obstructed by horsemen in their line of flight, they not unfrequently squat so closely that they can scarcely be distinguished from the surrounding rocks, as the greyish colour of their plumage so closely resembles the almost universal aspect of the Pampas of Patagonia. These birds, though not web-footed, can swim sufficiently well to pass a river. In the winter season
[26] it is not unfrequent for the Indians to drive them into the water, where, their legs getting numbed with cold, they are drifted to the shore by the current, and easily captured, being unable to move. In snowy weather they are also easily taken, as their eyes appear to be affected by the glare of the white snow, and their saturated plumage doubtless becomes heavier. They are polygamous, one male bird consorting with five or six hens, which lay their eggs in the same nest—a hole about two feet six inches in diameter,

2: Masters T-S (1869-1870)1873
SHS Tehuelche SHS

scraped out of the earth. They begin to lay in the early [136]
part of September, the number of eggs in each nest varying from twenty to as many as forty, or more. In the early part of the laying season extraneous eggs were found scattered in different parts of the plain, some of which were of diminutive size. Contrary to the usual rule amongst birds, the male sits on the eggs, and when the chickens are hatched assumes the charge of the brood. The young run immediately, or shortly after emerging from the shell, and are covered with a down of greyish black colour on the back, and whitish on the breast and neck. Their cry resembles the syllables pi. pi. pi. uttered in a sharp quick manner. The old male, when any danger appear, feigns to be hurt, like other birds endeavouring to distract the attention of the hunter, in order that his brood may escape by hiding in the grass. After the male has sat for some time on the nest (I should place the period of incubation at about three weeks), he gets thin, and the grass closely surrounding the nest is found eaten quite bare. The females by this time are beginning to pick up flesh, which is a fortunate provision of nature for the Indians, who cannot subsist on bare meat. Whilst the females are thin they are killed and skinned, the meat being left, and the skins sewn into mantles for sale at the settlements. These birds at that period are much afflicted with vermin, which invade the tuikes and guanaco mantles of the Indians, and cause them infinite annoyance. (A useful hint occurs to me for future travellers amongst the Patagonians—never allow the squaw of the establishment to place ostrich mantles under your sleeping hides.) The young Rhea does not attain its full plumage or size until the second year after its birth, and is never pursued by the Indians unless food is really scarce. The eggs are eaten in all stages, fresh [137]
or stale; the Indians not recognising much difference between the unhatched chicken and the unborn guanaco. The inveterate destroyers of these birds are, besides their human enemies, the puma and foxes, the former of which will car-

2: Musters T-S (1869-1870)1873
SHS Tehuelche SHS

136 prize and kill the sitting bird, which he carefully hides, and then proceed to eat the eggs with great gusto. We not unfrequently found the eggs broken and scattered by these animals, whilst the bird was generally discovered hard by. The foxes, I think, content themselves with sucking the eggs; but I was assured that near Geyluan, where wild cats are common, these latter will kill the bird on the nest, like their relatives the genus. Besides these there are the condors, eagles, and hawks, which no doubt commit extensive ravages on the young broods. With all these difficulties to contend with, the Rhea Darwinii exists in great numbers, and if not kept down to a certain extent by the Indians and
229 other enemies would overrun the whole country. We were, while at Chiriq, busily engaged in the destruction of both guanaco and ostrich, the high rugged range of hills that bounded Chiriq on the eastern side literally swarming with guanaco; and as the females, heavy with young, could not keep up their speed for a long distance, one man not unfrequently captured and killed five and six, or even eight; extracting the young and taking its skin for mantles and the carcase for food, while the hide of the mother served, if needed, to repair the toldo. The marrow bones also were taken as a dainty, but the meat was left for the condors, genus, and foxes. We hunted almost every day, and traversed
233 nearly all the surrounding country. The plains lying to the west afforded beautiful ground to ride over, covered with soft grass, but a few leagues from the Cordillera a sudden dip occurs, which forms a large basin, lying about fifty feet below the level of the plain, like the bed of a lake, and extending to the mountains; the surface of this was chiefly covered with grass, but in some parts the yellow clay and beds of stone were visible. On the higher ground, before reaching this basin, numerous lagoons occurred, round one of which there was a large gull-rookery, and the inhabitants made themselves audible at a long distance. Here also I
234 noticed many of the tero-tero, a spur-winged lapwing, com-

2: Musters T-S (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

more near Buenos Ayres. I had encountered them even as [34]
low as Santa Cruz, but never in such large numbers. Our 224
hunts on the plain were not so successful as those on the
hilly range, although in the previous year the Indians asserted
that the reverse had been the case. Perhaps the guanaco
had gained in experience, and felt themselves safer in the
rocky heights where riders were likely to get bad falls. The
Northern Indians ride most recklessly, going at full speed 412
down the most precipitous places, and, strange to say,
although one or two accidents did occur resulting in broken
limbs, they were not numerous. This speaks volumes for the
sure-footedness of their horses. It is their custom, when
hunting in rocky places, to place hide shoes on the horses
fore feet as a safeguard against sharp stones. After hunt-
ing, it was the rule every evening for those owning spare
horses (and indeed for those who did not) to repair to the
racecourse a little before sunset, and train or run their
horses, or look on at the others, and if there was a race,
make bets. The manner of racing is something similar to 526
that in vogue amongst the Gauchos in the provinces of 525
Rio de la Plata, except that it is generally conducted on
principles of fair play. The stakes are always deposited
before the race comes off: if horses, they are tied out handy;
if ornaments, bolas, &c., &c., they are placed in a heap, the
winners removing them directly the race is decided. The
horses are run bare-backed, the two riders starting them-
selves after cantering side by side for a few yards. Owing
to the great care taken in training the horses, very few
false starts ever occur. The races are very often for long dis-
tances, four miles or a league being the average, although,
of course, with young horses the distance is shorter. The 231
Indian manner of breaking colts is similar to that of the
Gauchos; they are, however, more gentle with their horses,
and consequently break them better. One rarely sees a
horse amongst the Indians that is not perfectly quiet; indeed,
the smallest children are nearly always mounted on the

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

started off; so, as my mantle was fast losing its beautiful 030
appearance, I put compunction on one side, and shortly killed them with a blow on the head. On arriving at the fire where some of the Indians were collected eating ostriches, I was proceeding to take the skins off, when Tankelow, who 262
presided, stopped me, saying that we would skin them in the toldos, where the blood would be a treat to the women and children. We accordingly reserved the luxury, and after a feed crossed a small stream and piece of marsh, beyond which lay the encampment, where the women soon verified Tankelow's words. Though the flesh of the young guanaco is rather tasteless and soft, the blood has a sweeter taste than that of the adult. The rennet, or milk, which is found curdled into a sort of cheese in the intestines, is also eaten with gusto. The most laborious part of young guanaco 281
hunting consists in taking off the skin, which, after the necessary incisions have been made with a knife, has to be taken off by hand, the thumb being used to separate the hide from the body. The calves, when three days old, run at [224]
about the speed of a horse's hand-gallop, but sometimes give longer chases. The Indian plan is to kill them with a blow on the head from a ball, and then pass on to another, and so on, afterwards returning to collect them in a heap and skin them. After the hide is taken off it is necessary to expose it to the air for a few minutes before folding it up, otherwise it is liable to get heated, and will tear easily in the subsequent processes. We hunted in the neighbourhood of Jeroshaik, 137
or 'Bad Hill,' several times, with varying success, sometimes proceeding up into the wooded hills, where the timber in some places grew in clumps, as if planted by the hand of man; in others filled up the rocky dells, until the main forests were reached, which appeared to extend far into the Cordillera. Most of the trees were of a species of beech, on which were many small edible fungi, some of which we gathered for use; and traces of red deer were frequently seen, 136
and a few were chased by the Indians, but owing to the

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

[136] thickness of the wood they escaped. Some of the Indians
137 took the opportunity to cut fresh poles for the toldos. The sight of woods and trees was so refreshing that I spent several days consecutively among them, very often alone, or with one companion. Nobody, except a sailor after months on the sea, can imagine the pleasure of wandering under trees to one who had passed so long a time in the barren and monotonous plains. The weather, however, still continued wet and inclement. On the 5th of December,
202 some of us wandering on the heights above, made out smoke to the N.E., and Campan went off at speed on horseback to reconnoitre. He returned towards nightfall very drunk, and riding straight to our toldo, proclaimed that El Sourdo, the Indian left behind in Santa Cruz, had arrived at a place close to us, bringing grog in two small barrels, and letters for me: when he had delivered his news, he, with some difficulty, dismounted without coming on his head; then produced a bottle half full of rum from under his mantle, which he dispensed to the attendant company.

574 Our toldo was soon crowded, and it was proposed that on the following day we should march and meet the visitor, all being eager for a drink. Accordingly, on the morrow we started, in a storm of sleet and rain, and prepared to hunt *en route*. While hunting, just after Jackechan and myself had killed an ostrich, the former perceived a single toldo, which he knew must be El Sourdo's, so we galloped towards it, accompanied by two other Indians, and were received with open arms by El Sourdo and his two wives,
574 Jackechan being a very old friend. We were made to sit
273 down, and the olla, or boiling-pot, was brought out by the two wives, who acted as Hebes by producing the rum, with which our host filled the pot, and dispensed the liquor in a pannikin. One of the wives then produced my letters, which proved to be from Mr. Clarke and Don Luiz P. B., the schooner having arrived on October 5, all safe. El Sourdo then gave me all the news verbatim—how a fight had taken

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

133 remedy. Whilst the women were pitching toldos, the men, eight in number, started to hunt again. Riding to the west, where the plain was still open, we came upon another of the huge basins previously described, on the western side of which, beyond a lagoon stocked with waterfowl, flowed a broad winding stream fringed with trees. At a short dis-
133 tance from the other side of the stream open glades extended
137 for the space of perhaps a mile to the verge of the interminable forests, rising high up on the lofty sides of mountains, some of whose summits were still partially snow-clad. To the south were two or three round detached hummocks, hardly deserving the name of hills, crowned with trees. In the foreground were immense herds of guanaco, and on the northern side frowned a high range of arid-looking hills, forming a great contrast to the deliciously-refreshing green aspect of the other points of view. Whilst waiting concealed behind a bush for the coming herd, which had been cunningly encircled by Tehaug and another Indian, and were to be driven in our direction, we gazed long at the beautiful view before us, and Orkeke pointed out a mountain some distance to the north, underneath which, he said, was the entrance to the scene of our future campaign against the wild cattle. Towards evening we returned to the toldos, pretty well loaded with skins. On another occasion, when hunting, we made a circle, finishing off in the wooded district near the banks of the river. On our return we hunted over a park-like country, with alternate open glades and woods. Here we killed a doe red deer and a large descrip-
[136] tion of fox, apparently identical with the Falkland Island species (Lupus antareticus). In the vicinity of the woods, the velvety sward was carpeted with the wild strawberry plants, which, however, were only in bloom. On this occasion our enjoyment was marred by one of the party getting a severe fall, which laid him up for a day or two. Before we reached the toldos rain set in heavily, which during the night turned to snow, and the morning sun shone on a white landscape.

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

During our stay the women went to the woods to cut fresh poles for the toldos, and the men brought back from the wooded country a description of fungus, which, when dried, forms an excellent tinder, of considerable value amongst the Indians, as there are only a few spots where it is to be obtained. After some days spent in this pleasant neighbourhood, as the supply of guanaco was failing, we marched over the barren range of hills, and passing a lagoon of considerable extent below the hills, encamped on the other side of them, by the side of a smaller one, in a place called 'Gogomenykaik.'

During the hunt I had singled out a guanaco, and was in full chase across the upper pampa, which was covered with stunted bushes and tufts of grass, when the quarry suddenly disappeared, as if the earth had swallowed him. The next moment my horse halted in mid-gallop, with its fore feet on the edge of a precipitous descent which shelved away without any warning. Below was a long beautiful glen, with a pool of water glistening among the trees which filled it, but did not rear their topmost boughs above the level of the pampa. Here the guanaco had taken refuge, and as the descent was impracticable for a horse, I could only gaze longingly down into the fairy-like scene, and turn away to join the circle, remembering that it was only too easy to lose oneself by delay. Of this an instance occurred the same day, for one of the Chilians did not appear at the fireside when the hunting was completed. At first no heed was bestowed on him, as it was natural to suppose that he had chased a herd of guanaco to some distance, and was detained taking off the skins; but when at sunset he was still missing, some dry grass was fired, for the purpose of directing him to our camp. The following morning he had not appeared when we started to hunt, myself going as pointsman with Orkeke. We galloped for some distance over the plain, and halted in a hollow, where we came on six young skunks outside their parental burrow, into which they quickly vanished on our

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

stant he felt the unwonted incumbrance he back-jumped for several yards, finally jumping into the middle of the brook and nearly losing his footing. I spurred him out, and once on the bank he commenced to whirl round and round like a teetotum. At last I got his head straight, and after a few more back-jumps he went off at a racing speed, urged by whip and spur. After a stretching gallop of three miles, I rode him quietly back, now and again turning him to accustom him to the bridle-thong, but not venturing to feel his mouth, and then brought him up to the toldo amidst the shouts of the spectators. Orkaka expressed great surprise, and wanted to know where I had learned to 'domar'; and the gratified owner insisted on presenting me with a piece of tobacco. This was most welcome, as my store was almost exhausted, though it had been replenished occasionally by the possessors of guns and revolvers in return for my services in putting the locks to rights; and the fear of being left tobaccoless—the agony of which all smokers will appreciate—was becoming unpleasantly strong. The following day we bade adieu to the lagoon, which, as usual, was covered with swans and other wild-fowl, which we never molested, husbanding our powder in the event of future disturbances with other Indians. We marched a few miles, and encamped near the river—indeed, on its very banks, under the shadows of the trees. Here we passed our time away hunting, bathing in the stream, smoking, and lying in the shade for three days. One of my horses being lame, I could not hunt every day, so frequently passed hours under the trees by the river, scrubbing my one remaining shirt for future use, and working hide, &c. As writing in the toldo was made almost impossible by the curiosity of the children, crowding round me and asking questions, I generally used to take my note-book to my retreat; here, however, I was often interrupted by the girls, who came on the pretence of bathing, and evinced great playful curiosity as to the contents of my book—for here, too, I used to peruse and re-

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

where we smoked. We had previously passed guanaco and ostrich, but no notice was taken of them, the Indians having larger game in view. After passing this brook, the head-water of the river near which we had left the toldos, we skirted a large basin-like plain of beautiful green pasture, and after galloping for some time entered the forest, travelling along a path which only permitted us to proceed in Indian-file. The trees were in many places dead, not blackened by fire, but standing up like ghostly bleached and bare skeletons. It is a remarkable fact that all the forests on the eastern side are skirted by a belt of dead trees. At length, however, just as we came in sight of a curiously pointed rock which in the distance resembled the spire of a church, we entered the forest of live trees; the undergrowth was composed of currant, bay, and other bushes, whilst here and there were beds of yellow violets, and the inevitable strawberry plants everywhere. After crossing a stream, which, flowing from the north, afterwards took a westerly course, thus proving that we had passed the watershed, we proceeded, under cover of a huge rock, to reconnoitre the hunting ground. The scenery was beautiful: a valley, about a mile wide, stretched directly under us; on the southern verge a silver line marked the easterly river, and another on the northern the one debouching in the Pacific; whilst above, on both sides, rose high mountains covered with vegetation and almost impenetrable forests. On the western side of the valley a solitary bull was leisurely taking his breakfast, and above our look-out rock a huge condor lazily flapped his wings. These were the only specimens of animal life in view. Pursuing our way in perfect silence, as from the first entrance into the forests speaking had been prohibited, we followed the leader along the narrow cattle path, passing here and there the remains of a dead bull or cow that had met their fate by the Indian's lazo, and at length descended to the plain. It was about midday, and the day was warm, so we halted, changed horses, looked to our girths, got lazos ready

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

133 for use, and then started on. As we were proceeding we
136 observed two or three animals amongst the woods on the
224 opposite side, but knowing that it would be useless to follow, pursued our course up the valley. Having crossed the western stream, we at once entered a thicket where the path was scarcely distinguishable from the cover, but our leader never faltered, and led the way through open glades alternating with thick woods, on every side of which were cattle marks, many being holes stamped out by the bulls, or wallowing places. The glades soon terminated in forests, which seemed to stretch unbroken on either side. We had expected before reaching this point to have found cattle in considerable numbers, but the warmth of the day had probably driven them into the thickets to seek shelter. We now commenced to ascend over a dangerous path, encumbered here and there with loose boulders and entangled in dense thickets, whilst we could hear and catch occasional glimpses of the river foaming down a ravine on our left, and presently arrived at the top of a ridge where the forests became more uniformly dense, and we could with great difficulty pursue our way. It was a mystery to me how Orkeke, who acted as guide, knew where we were, as on one occasion the slightly-marked paths diverged in different directions, and on another we literally found ourselves amongst fallen trees in a forest so dense that the light of day scarcely penetrated its shades. Our leader, however, never hesitated, but led us onwards in all confidence. Whilst brushing along, if I may be allowed the term, trying to keep the leader in sight, I heard something tapping on a tree, and looking up, saw close above
[136] me a most beautifully marked red-crested woodpecker. We at length commenced to descend, and, after passing many channels of rivulets issuing from springs, where a slip of the horse's foot on the wet and mossy stones would have occasioned something worse than broken bones, as they were situated on the edge of a deep ravine, finally emerged from the woods and found ourselves on a hill of some three hundred

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

feet in height, when we looked down on a broad plain in the form of a triangle, bounded by the river flowing through the ravine on the north side, and on the southern by another coming from the south, which two streams united in one large river at the western apex, at a distance of about perhaps a league. Above and around, on all sides excepting to the west and the ravines through which the rivers flowed, rose the unbroken wall of the lofty mountains of the Cordillera, many of their peaks snow-clad. No sound was to be heard except the rushing of the river in the ravine, and no animal life to be seen except a condor or two floating high above us in the clear sky. The scene was sublime, and I viewed it in silence for some minutes, till the pipe, being handed to me, dispelled all nascent poetic tendencies. The Indians remained silent and looked disgusted, as a herd of cattle had been expected to be viewed on the plain below. We descended to the flats, and crossed the river, on the banks of which 'Paja' or Pampa-grass grew in abundance, as well as the bamboo-like canes from which Araucanian Indians make their lance shafts, and a plant called by the Chilians 'Talka,' the stalk of which, resembling rhubarb, is refreshing and juicy. On the northern edges and slope of the ravine behind us towered graceful pines sixty feet high, which, though an impassable barrier of rock prevented close inspection, appeared to be a species of Araucaria; the bark was imbricated and the stems rose bare of branches for two-thirds of their height, like those figured by M. Gay. Many had been carried down by landslips, and lay tossed and entangled on the sides of the ravine. The increase of temperature after passing the watershed was sensibly great, amounting to from seven to ten degrees, and the vegetation far more luxuriant, the plants presenting many new forms unknown at the eastern side. After leaving the plain and crossing the shallow stream, we left our mantles, and girthed up near a tree in a thicket festooned with a beautiful creeper, having a bell-shaped flower of violet radiated with brown. The

2: Mustere T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SHS Tehuelche SHS

224
134
132
137

A WILD BULL IN THE CORDILLERA.

[facing p. 159]

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

[232] found one chased; but he, although bulled by Orkeke, contrived to slip the bolas, and scrapping to cover stood to bay, where he was left master of the field. This bull would have been taken had the other Indians showed any degree of alacrity when Orkeke bulled him; but they were dispirited by the previous failure. As evening was coming on I noticed a current on the river: this and the increase of temperature led me to believe that had we penetrated a few miles farther west we should have reached the shores of the Pacific. Pursuing our track homewards, after the second unsuccessful engagement, we managed to pass the thick forest before dark, and descending to the eastern valley saw numerous cows and bulls at intervals. A short time after dark we encamped for the night under the shelter of some trees near to the head-waters of the western river, and after a pipe—by way of supper—wrapping ourselves in our mantles were soon fast asleep. At daylight we mounted and [237] continued our journey, arriving about two P.M. pretty considerably hungry, having eaten nothing barring strawberries and talka, and a few stripe currants, since our last evening in the toldos. The women were naturally disappointed at our ill-luck, but uttered no complaints or reproaches, and hastened to pound some charqui for our refreshment. Next day, all except myself and my companion in the overthrow, who complained of headache, went out hunting and returned at night with young guanaco, and an ostrich or two. Some of the women had seen cattle near the encampment, and Orkeke informed me that in former years they used to occupy the plains below us in large herds, but that the Indians had driven them into the interior by excessive hunting: he also [233] stated that on one occasion he spent some months in this spot, and caught and tamed a considerable number. His accurate knowledge of the country made his statement credible, and he also showed me a sort of corral that had been made to enclose the wild animals. For my own [238] part, the name of the Cordillera recalls the most hungry

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

adjourned to the toldos, situated on the bend of the river near a ford or pass. We had now arrived at the camp agreed on as a general rendezvous at Henno, previous to the dispersion of the Indians. This valley is called Teckel, and is a favourite resting-place after the young guanaco season, both for the purpose of refreshing the horses and manufacturing the young guanaco skins into mantles, previous to proceeding to trade either at the Rio Negro or with the Indians of Las Manzanas. The encampment is usually situated on the ground occupied at this time, viz., on the west side of the river, about a mile from a large barren hill which shuts out the view of the Cordillera. On the east side the valley extends some three miles, and continues open to the north for perhaps six miles. It is all fertile, but the best grazing ground is at the north-east end. The banks of the river, which are destitute of trees, are in many places high, and formed under the surface earth of various stratified clays—blue, white, and red. In the bottom of the stream, which is singularly free from stones, thick beds of clay are of frequent occurrence, almost approaching to the tufa found in the Parana and other confluents of La Plata, and in some spots there are beds of black sand, probably auriferous; fish are procurable in any eddy or pool, and crayfish abound and form the most tempting bait for the others. Out of some of the finest clay I was enabled to manufacture a pipe by the simple process of shaping it in the hand and then baking it in the ashes, but it did not last long. Shortly after our arrival one of the small children, whilst playing with bolas formed out of the foot and sinews of an ostrich, hurt himself, and in consequence a slaughter of mares took place, which opportunely enabled us to dispense with hunting and rest our horses, which by this time stood in sore need of some bye days, though, as there was a good racecourse, we frequently indulged in a race just to keep the horses in exercise. After we had been about a week settled here, the women being all hard at work making up mantles—which will be described in

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

592 position as secretary and general referee next in rank to the cacique, scarcely reconciled me to the exchange of the orderly comfort of Mrs. Orkeke's household for the dignified discomfort of my present quarters. They were also shared by Meha, whose good qualities had raised him above his fellow-Chilians. Their number had been reduced to four, Arina having disappeared whilst hunting near Teckel: without doubt his quarrelsome disposition had occasioned his death at the hands of some one whom he had insulted or offended.

133 The route followed led northwards through a valley on both sides of which we hunted, and arrived in the afternoon at an encampment called Cargo-kaik, or Four Hills. There was nothing remarkable in the scenery: the hill-sides on either hand were covered with scrub, and the summits presented masses of rocks, and in some places loose boulders, amongst which numerous armadilloes were basking in the sun. They

136 are easily captured, as they are very slow; but if they once get into their burrow it is difficult to extract them, owing to the tenacity with which they hold fast to the soil. They are

252 very good eating, and are usually cooked in the shell on the fire, the entrails, &c., being taken out, and the cavity filled with heated stones. When they are in their best condition, one leg is sufficient for a man, as there is about an inch of yellow fat on them. Of the shells the women make work-

281 415 baskets, to contain their bodkins, sinews, &c., when sewing, or to serve as colour-boxes for the different colours when painting.

852 The day following our arrival, Tankelow and another Indian were despatched as messengers to the party of Araucanian Indians, or Manzaneros, supposed to be encamped a few marches distant. During that night a child was born, the parents of which were rich, and accordingly a great slaughter of mares took place, the mandil tent was erected, and a feast and dance announced.

648 576 Meanwhile, about four P.M., the chasquis returned, bringing with them an Araucanian Indian, who was escorted to

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

CW whole cavalcade of women and children were in motion, and the circle formed for the hunt.

133 Several shallow streams, fringed with dwarf beeches, were crossed, flowing into lagoons or into the Teshal River, the course of which lay north-east of our line, and the cavalcade of women struck the valley occasionally in the march. Of the hills dividing these streams, the southern side consisted of gradual slopes covered with coarse grass, while the northern counterslopes were precipitous, and covered with loose rocks and stones. Orkeke, in the previous marches, had often informed me that the Araucanos' country was very stony, and that there were a great many armadillos, but little other game; and this day guanaco were rarely seen, but ostriches were numerous and armadillo abounded.

After crossing several ridges and glens, we at length traversed a hillocky plain, of the usual scrub-covered aspect, and strewn with flint, agate, and other pebbles, and encamped for the night in a place called 'Woolkain,' situated by the side of a water-course which was now nearly dry, the water only remaining in the deep holes. We had left the cañon or valley of the river Teshal a few miles east, from which point it appeared to give a sharp turn in an easterly direction.

To the west the mountains of the Cordillera were visible about twenty miles distant, while on the south were the rocky abrupt hills already passed over, and on the north a range of rather peaked hills running west, and appearing to slope at their western extremity towards the plains beneath the Cordillera. Next morning, before the rime was off the pasture, we were again *en route*, and after a rocky descent of perhaps fifty feet reached a second plain, everywhere strewn with stones, which rendered galloping very difficult; nevertheless a large herd of guanaco were enclosed, and numbers killed, while ostrich, on the contrary, appeared to be very
● 136 scarce. To my great surprise, whilst running some guanaco, two large partridges got up from close to my horse's feet,

Z: Musters T-S (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5
Araucanos SG4

and flying a short distance settled again. Partridges had been described to me in the neighbourhood of Santa Cruz, but I had never seen one, and these were the first met with in the country. Towards three in the afternoon we emerged from the stony district to a plain covered with sand and scrub, and after rebushing ourselves at a circuit, travelled westward, with the Cordillera in full front, till we turned a high cliff which jutted out from the grassy slopes in which the hills fall gradually down to the plains, and beyond it, turning again northward, entered a level plain, at the far extremity of which we observed with great contentment the ascending smoke from the toldos of the Araucanian Indians. On the south-west edge of this valley the high bustling cliff obscured the view of the wooded mountains, which, however, showed out between the hills skirting in the valley we had traversed up to this point. On the eastern side rose a range of hills, barren and desolate, with here and there a single guanaco in solitary majesty, cropping the stunted grass. In front of us, directly to the north, lay a large lagoon, in which numerous swans and flamingoes were wading and swimming about. Beyond it were visible the toldos of the Araucanians, ten in number.

We halted near the head of the lagoon, under shelter of some thick bushes, to collect our forces, don our best ponchos and silver ornaments, and change our horses, and then proceeded slowly to within about a quarter of a mile of the toldos. To our great surprise nobody appeared to receive us; but at length a woman arrived with the intelligence that all the men were away hunting, but had been sent for, and would arrive shortly.

Our women meanwhile erected the toldos on a green sward, carpeted with strawberry plants, near to a small stream which divided our camp from that of the Araucanos. All dismounted and rested after the long journey of fully forty miles from the previous station; and in about half an hour the Araucanos appeared, galloping like demons. Their

2: Musters T-S (1869-1870)1871
SH5 Tehuelche SH5
Araucanos S64

T
248 Tehuelches would believe this touch the fish caught by me,
226 and even expressed great disgust at the idea, is worthy of
177 note, as it has been stated that on the coast they catch and eat sea-fish, which could only be alleged by persons ignorant of their real habits of life.*

T
183 On the 13th we marched; the cause of our detention for the two extra days being the continued sickness of Grimé, who, however, at length determined to make an effort and proceed, although barely able to sit on his horse. The women followed, more or less, the valley of the river, whilst the hunters ranged over the hills, which on the western side were in most parts free from rock and stones and abounded with ostriches. During the journey I came suddenly on two
T wild cats, one of which my dog attacked and killed, and the
[illegible] other fell a victim to my bolas. These were of the species common in the provinces of La Plata, and especially in the islands of the Parana. Towards evening we came on another small stream flowing into the main river, into the plain of which we subsequently descended and found the toldos
A already pitched, literally 'sub tegmine fagi.' During this
609 day's ride, happening to be in the same part of the circle as the Araucanians, we cooked our dinners in company and rode home together. On the way Quintuleuf's eldest son, with whom I had always had very friendly relations, said that he desired to recognise me as his brother. So we accordingly joined hands, and riding together formally declared that we were as brothers, and would always remember the duties of our relationship and assist each other, if needs be, in whatever part of the world we might be placed. All this was very satisfactory, and it may be interesting to the reader to know that my sisters and cousins were the good-looking girls who had asked such curious questions at Esgel, and with whom, though we could not understand each other's language, I had always kept up a laughing acquaintance, thereby arousing considerable jealousy in the bosoms of my

* Cf. Guinnard, 'Three Years' Slavery,' p. 78.

Tehuelche priests

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5
Araucanians 564

Tehuelche friends. The gloriously warm weather, which, for a wonder, continued during our stay at Lilly-haik, as this station was named, rendered our residence there most enjoyable, and we revelled in the simple pleasures of the woods; sometimes three or four of us would go across the brook, and traversing a plain occupied by the horses and cattle, search for strawberries amongst the ravines of the neighbouring mountains, or climb the tall trees and gather the yellow insipid fungus adhering to the branches, or lie down amongst the wild violets and enjoy the *dolce far niente*. These Indian children of nature showed themselves as thoroughly able to appreciate the idleness of gathering fruit and flowers and roaming in the woods as school children on a holiday ramble. On one occasion Casimiro and several others proceeded in search of wood wherewith to construct saddles, and we felled several fine trees, selecting and cutting off suitable pieces of timber. It was hard work with blunt axes, but Indians are indefatigable when they once commence a task. After my spell at the axe I wandered off with a companion into the thicker forest in search of fungus to make tinder. Of this we found little, but thirst soon made us seek for water, and discover a delicious ice-cold rivulet, embowered with currant bushes bearing ripe fruit. Here we remained a short time smoking and picking currants, recumbent on the mossy turf, till a shout in the distance warned us that our companions were returning. On our way home we killed one of the flat toad-like lizards which the Indians regard as devilish; we also caught a young skunk, which Casimiro wished to keep as a pet for the children, but at my instance let it go and enjoy the delights of freedom. 'Fancy a tame skunk!' some may exclaim; but in Hinchel's toldo there were two skunks which, perfectly tame and as playful as kittens, ran about everywhere, never using their offensive powers, and sometimes getting lost for an hour or two caused a dreadful outcry to be raised by the children until they were found.

The hill slopes were a garden of calceolarias, alyssum, tiny

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SHS Tehuelche SHS

probably Rahuel-huapi. The pasture in the immediate[33
vicinity of the camp was scanty, having apparently been recently burned, but the soil was of a rich alluvial description. In the chase the most remarkable thing observed was the[34
abundance of armadillos, one hunter frequently bringing in two or three. Fish also were abundant in the river, and averaged a larger size than those previously caught.

On February 18th smoke was observed to the northward, not far distant, and towards evening a chasqui arrived, bringing with him a couple of bottles of liquor for Quintahual, as well as news that things were going on well amongst Foyel's people; and on the 21st we again marched over a high plateau broken by numerous irregular ravines which appeared to have been swept by an inundation. High isolated cliffs stood up as though the waters had washed round them and swept away the intervening soil, leaving their water-worn faces marked with the indelible record of the floods, as plainly as the torn and blasted rocks in the southern districts bore the traces of volcanic fires. At last a more unbroken plain terminated suddenly in a shelving descent of 300 to 400 feet, the wall of a chasm covered with grass and shrubs interspersed with scattered boulders, down which we made our way, encamping near the base, where a beautiful spring gushed from the side. The bottom of the cañon, which was nearly half a mile in width, contained a watercourse, the bed of which was dry at this season, except a few pools of stagnant water unsuitable for drinking.

It was intended to despatch messengers from this place,202
which was called Cushamen, to Foyel, and also Chocoque, the chief of Las Manzanas, warning him of our near approach; and accordingly, after our arrival in camp, I wrote a letter to the said chieftain at the dictation of Casimiro, which in well-rounded periods and with much complimentary verbiage explained the fact and reasons of our having united all the Indians and inviting their co-operation.

The following morning, after the letter had been read and

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

202 explained to the assembled caciques, the two messengers (sons of caciques) appeared with two horses each, and after receiving some verbal injunctions, started on their journey, amidst the howlings of a few old women and a blast from the 000 cornet. The remainder of us, who had mounted, to add to the pomp and ceremony of the occasion, went out hunting, some following the ravine in an easterly direction, which, penetrating high pampas, opened into a plain containing a lagoon fed by the waters of the brook, whilst others encircled the high pampas above. Hinchel, whom I accompanied on
● 136 this occasion, pointed out to me several small holes with little mounds of earth and rubbish at the mouth, which he asserted to be the abodes of snakes, but no occupants were visible outside. He described the snakes as dark in colour, about two feet six inches long, and perfectly harmless,
[262] adding that they would be good to eat, which facts were subsequently corroborated by Casimiro.

231 One of the troubles of pampa life is occasionally losing one's horses, as was my case in this place, and I spent one entire day in search before I recovered them, as they had strayed in company with a troop of mares far up the valley, which here divided into two branches, opening into watered grassy plains extending to the Cordillera. As there were horse tracks up both valleys, according to the usual law of contrariety I took the wrong one at first and had a long gallop for nothing. At any time it is troublesome to have to look through about two thousand horses all unmarked, and many of the same colour, and perhaps resembling those belonging to the perplexed searcher. An Indian, however,
[151] with his natural quickness of sight, will distinguish his own horses at a great distance amongst a hundred others. It has been already said that in this roving life all must look after their own horses, for Indians do not understand another person doing it for them, unless he be a son or relation, and in all cases when preparing for the march every one is expected to find and bring up his own.

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5
Araucanians 564

During our stay (until the 28th) in this encampment, the cold winds again set in, and snow fell on one occasion, but not in great quantity, and we were all very glad at length to get the order to march, and proceeded in joyous expectation of shortly meeting the chasquis with news from the other Indians. By this time the young guanaco had grown to considerable size and afforded a lengthened chase, but their skins were useless for mantles, the fur having acquired more of the thick woolly nature of that of the full-grown animal. The next halt was made in a place called Telck, a valley of considerable width, on one edge of which the burrow of a Patagonian hare or cavy was pointed out to me, but the owner was not visible. Here a messenger arrived with an answer to our letter from Foyel, indited by a Valdivian Indian named Antonio Guaitu, educated by the missionaries, who filled the post of secretary to the chief. The caciques having formed a circle, in which my place was next the president, Casimiro, the chasquis were introduced, and ceremoniously handed me the letter, written in most peculiar Spanish, which, after some private study, I was able to decipher and expound to the attentive assembly. It contained many expressions of goodwill, and hopes of a speedy meeting, winding up with an apology that, owing to having left his country north of the Rio Limay, and come down into these parts in order to hunt the young guanaco, he regretted having so few warriors in his train wherewith to welcome 'the great chief of the south,' viz., Casimiro. After this function, with my deportment in which, be it modestly said, all the chiefs were much pleased, as well as gratified by the amicable contents of the despatch, one of the Araucanian caciques assuring me with many compliments that his horses were always at my disposal for a mount, all adjourned to a shooting match, or rather pistol practice, at which the performances were decidedly moderate, and the mark seemed to be the safest place. Starting thence on March 8, and travelling always north-

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

755 his mouth close to its chest and shouted to bring the devil out: he then turned it on its face and repeated the same process. The child's health mended next day, and it was shortly out of danger.

224 About ten o'clock at [redacted] Casimiro returned with his horses, which had strayed a considerable distance on the road back to Geylum. The next day a long march of twenty miles brought us to an encampment on the western verge of a broad plain, watered by a brooklet. During the [136] hunt the first Patagonian hares, or cavies, were caught. These little animals live in burrows, but are generally out feeding or sleeping in the grass during the day. They are excessively swift for perhaps a mile, but, like the foxes of this country soon get tired. The chase of these small deer afforded an agreeable relief to the monotony of the journey. As soon as we entered a plain or valley where they abounded, as they always were found in numbers where the pasture was good, all hurried off to 'stop the earths,' *i.e.*, close up the burrows with bushes; but the cunning little beasts often evaded us by slipping into a burrow overlooked by the earth, stoppers. It required considerable skill to bring them down with the bolas, as, if only caught round the legs or body, they disentangled themselves quickly, but a blow on the head proved at once fatal. They are good eating, though the flesh [262 281] is somewhat dry when roasted. Their skins are made up into mantles, but are of little value, as the hair soon comes off.

133 About a mile below the encampment, where the sandy plain narrowed and sloped down to a low-lying grassy valley, a singular phenomenon presented itself. The morning after our arrival, when going out to look for the horses, a furious easterly gale whirled the dust aloft in dense clouds, and, to my great surprise, the sand, which was driven into our faces, was as hot as when the fire so nearly encircled us. Almost blinded in forcing our way through this curtain of driving sand, we rode right into a hollow, where the earth appeared to be on fire; as the horses plunged

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

137 We remained some days in this place, and whilst hunting in the surrounding country (where hares abounded), we observed a new description of spinous shrub with small ovate leaves and yellow flowers, resembling holly, and growing to about two feet in height. Casimiro and myself agreed to try
757 whether the leaves might not be medicinal, so a quantity were bruised and boiled: the infusion proved exceedingly bitter, reminding me of quinine, and acted as an admirable sudorific, being administered to the invalids with great success. In
133 one of our excursions we had crossed the hills and descended on a high elevated plain, concluding our hunt near a swelling eminence exactly resembling a huge 'barrow' thickly overgrown with shrubs, from which what appeared to be a saline was espied, to our great delight. Hinchel and myself being alone, and having a fat ostrich to discuss for dinner, determined to enjoy our meal by its shore, first testing the quality of the salt, a luxury which we had long been destitute of. Dismounting, we proceeded to investigate it; but to our great disappointment, after walking over every part of
[135] it, and digging down with knives a foot below the surface, the supposed salt proved to be bitter and nauseous nitrate of soda.
132 After quitting the vicinity of the Cordillera the weather had every day become warmer, and the frosts at night much lighter: indeed whilst in Telck some warm days were experienced, although the winter season was fast approaching.
137 Near this encampment the small edible root previously described as growing in the dried-up lagoons was found in abundance, and was collected by the women and children.
[136] Cavies were plentiful in the hollows and valleys in the neighbouring hills, and even close to the encampment, but the chase of other game proved difficult, the hill sides being so strewn with stones as to render galloping a horse a
777 certainty of laming him. In this neighbourhood Hinchel pointed out a detached pinnacle of rock, much resembling that noticed at Geylum, and according to custom invoked a
135 blessing from the guardian spirit; and then he informed me

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

dered observation and record, in addition to hunting and the usual toils of marching, impossible. It was the more needful for me to endeavour to keep up, as all were more or less ill, and becoming increasingly gloomy and dispirited. To add to the troubles which weighed down the Indians' spirits at this place, the doctor's horse fell while descending a precipitous rocky hill. The unfortunate physician was stunned, and very nearly crushed to death by the horse falling on him; great grief was universally expressed at this catastrophe, as no one was left to cure the invalids and contend with the malignant Gualichu, who, it was natural for the Indians to imagine, had laid a trap for his opponent, and upset the medicine man's steed in order to have the field clear for himself.

We encamped in a sort of morass, by the side of the hills overlooking the plain, and were woke at daylight by the chattering of a flock of blue and orange paroquets; these birds, which brought back old pleasant associations of the banks of the Parana, and almost seemed to be harbingers of civilised life, were numerous in this locality, though they were the first of the species that I had observed in the country.

The distant signal smoke was concluded to indicate the presence of Jackechan and the Pampa Indians under Teneforo, and all were in spirits at the prospect of obtaining news, and perhaps luxuries in the shape of flour, yerba, &c., from Patagones. The order was accordingly given to march, and a large answering signal fire kindled in some dry pasture bordering the hill side, a messenger being at the same time despatched to ascertain the news. After a rather long march over a barren plain strewn with angular masses of chalcedony and projecting rocks resembling alabaster, we arrived at a dreary encampment, sheltered under a bank, from which a spring gushed out, forming a refreshing rivulet.

The mutiny of my page had compelled me to enjoy the pleasure of driving my own cattle, following the track in

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

203 be peaceable at Patagones, and a rumour was current that Commandante Murga was about to give up his governorship. Casimiro, on receiving all this intelligence, immediately wished a despatch to be indited, although I pointed out to him that it would be better to wait until we had arrived at a nearer point; he was so urgent that on the following morning I composed an elaborate letter, detailing the union of the tribes, the precautions taken for protecting Patagones, and requesting a hundred mares for Casimiro and his people: when finished it was carefully wrapped up and stowed away in my baggage till wanted.

202 The talk then naturally turned on the subject of the choice of messengers to be despatched to Patagones on our arrival at Margensho. It had been previously arranged that I should be sent fully commissioned, as being better able to represent to the authorities what had been resolved on, as well as to impress upon them the immediate requirements of the Indians, and several others now volunteered to accompany me, and got quite merry at the thoughts of a drink. But we were still three marches distant from Margensho. The following

133 day we were again *en route*, traversing a succession of plains with rocky ridges cropping up at intervals, until we at length reached a grassy valley enclosed by steep walls of rocks sixty feet high; gravely perched on the summits of

[136] which several slate-coloured Chilian eagles were visible, their occupation being to prevent the excessive multiplication of little cavies. On the hill sides bordering this valley, our old friend the incense bush, which had for many marches back been very scarce, grew in luxuriant profusion. At this

[272] season it was covered with berries which, though uneatable, are used by the Indians mixed up with water as a drink; this infusion has a very sweet taste, but I should think must be very unwholesome. On arriving at the encamp-

165 ment, at the head of the valley, near some pools of standing water, we were apprised, by the lugubrious sounds of the women's monotonous chants, that the number of the children

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

484 passed the time in talking over what we would get, how we should be received, and in smoking and singing. Our route lay along the barranca, which changed as we proceeded in a N.E. direction, to higher rugged hills interspersed with sandy valleys covered with scrub and incense bushes.

By nightfall we had arrived at a pointed hill, under the brow of which we encamped. We had seen plenty of ostrich and guanaco, but had not delayed to hunt, only pausing to pick up an armadillo that happened to be basking in our road.

On dismounting we secured all the horses with lazos or maneos, as they might probably be inclined to stray away. After gathering a little firewood, kindling a fire, and discussing the armadillo and a small piece of meat each, we wrapped ourselves in our mantles and lay down to sleep, every now and again during the night getting up to have a look at the horses. The morning star was shining brightly above the horizon when we saddled up, and crossing the brow of the hill mounted to an adjoining pampa, where the rocky nature of the ground obliged our unshod horses to go at a foot pace. Added to this a bitter cold wind and small driving rain were not improving to the temper, until after an hour or two of difficult and slow travelling, the sun rose magnificently and dispelled the mists and drizzle, and re-
484 stored our cheerfulness. We at length descended into a
133 ravine leading to a series of small valleys, containing here and there ponds covered with teal and other water birds.
[136] We travelled at a gallop through the same description of country till five P.M., when, after passing a high barren plateau, similar to that encountered at starting, we suddenly came to an abrupt declivity, at the bottom of which, in a plain extending for about five miles, lay a large salina.

484 We descended where it was feasible, and after stopping to get a little salt, proceeded to encamp near a small spring of fresh water. About a mile to the eastward large herds of

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

guanaco and several ostrich were visible in the plain, and near our halting-place we found the tracks of a puma, for which we searched diligently, but without success.

After securing our horses, as on the previous night, we dined, minus armadillo, off a piece of scraggy meat, and turned in. The salt from the salina was of excellent quality; it was necessary to remove a little of the upper surface, which had slightly deteriorated by exposure to the atmosphere, and then we cut out cakes of salt like pieces of ice, which served for plates. It is a strange fact that both into this and other salinas small rivulets of fresh water flowed, fed by springs in the neighbouring hills.

The next morning (if it could be so called) at the same hour we were in the saddle, and traversing the plain crossed some ridges of moderate height, and continued passing through a tract of country thickly wooded with incense and other bushes. About two P.M. we arrived at a rivulet of water, near which were marks of a recent encampment; after examining these, we came to the conclusion that a week had perhaps elapsed since the occupants had left. We travelled forward at our utmost speed over ground of much the same description, diversified now and again by ranges of low hills, putting up occasionally a partridge, of which birds we observed two different species, one crested, and nearly as large as a hen pheasant, and the other smaller than an English bird, and which took only short flights and then cowered—and were fortunate enough to kill a couple. The sun went down behind some hills, and still we found no suitable place to halt in; at last, however, we came to some ponds of water, where we all, being pretty well tired, dismounted, and tethering two of the horses allowed the remainder to go loose. We found the water brackish, though drinkable, but the animals would scarcely touch it, and wandered about, necessitating a watch on them all night; this was rather weary work, especially as a sharp frost came on, and with all our care, at starting-time two horses were missing. After a

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

521 the tea came from, and various other questions evincing a considerable amount of information; and wound up by proposing that I should set up a trading establishment near the Chupat; Jackechan—who, if any one can claim it, is the real lord of the soil—having volunteered to cede the ground to me. In the event of establishing a store in that neighbourhood, this astute Indian considered that all the Indian trade would be taken out of the hands of the people of Patagones, who notoriously used false weights, besides charging exorbitantly for all articles supplied to the Indians.

484 About two P.M., as the rough shingle had already begun
133 to tell on our horses' feet, a halting-place was found near a laguna containing rain-water of the colour of *café au lait*. The horses were for the present let loose, to pick up the best meal they could off the stunted grass near the borders of the lagoon. Before dark most of them were tethered, and a careful watch kept all night, lest they should return to Valchita in search of pasture and water. After a lengthened conversation by the fireside—in which I was informed that the track we were travelling was called Pigs' Road, from
[134] wild pigs, or perhaps peccaries, having been killed near one of the lagoons in the route—we wrapped ourselves in our manties and sheltered ourselves like hedgehogs under the bushes, from time to time getting up to look round for the horses. Next day we rode o[illegible] the same interminable
137 desert of stones, and bushes of the following descriptions: chañal or whitethorn; picayun, furnishing the best firewood; the osier-like switches before described; black bush, which is useless for burning, owing to the pestiferous smell it emits; algarroba, incense, which are, however, very scarce; and some others whose names I was unable to procure. The chañal is the only one that impedes the traveller's progress, as the thorns are large and sharp. In the other road (more to the west), which we had avoided, although the distance is shorter across the travesia, and therefore more used by the Tehuelches, who dread this crossing, especially in summer

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

or for small parties, the chañal grows to the height of ten to fifteen feet, and, like the 'waitabit' thorns in Albania, renders fast riding impossible. 137

This day we were about to start hunting, when a demi-john of rum was discovered in a bush. This put an end to the sport, for, although it was hidden again in another place, enough was taken out to render most of the party talkative, a bottle or two also being reserved for discussion at the camp fire. 425

At four P.M. we encamped by the side of a lagoon similar to the previous one, and, our Valchita water being finished, diluted the rum with meal and water about the consistency of Spanish chocolate. I forgot to state that in the excitement of the 'find' the horses were not looked after, and on mustering to proceed, one of Nacho's had disappeared, and, although carefully searched for, he was not found again. 484

The next day, despite the dissipations over night, we were in the saddle at daybreak and had hardly traversed a league of this weariesome waste when we came suddenly upon seven wild horses. An effort made to surround them failed, owing to the difficult nature of the ground; but the failure was to me fully made up by the magnificent spectacle of these splendid creatures careering in their untamed strength and beauty across the plain. 136 ● 484

We subsequently hunted and killed guanaco and ostrich, and also saw some hares and partridges. At about ten A.M. our eyes were gladdened by the sight of the sea, and presently the level plain rose into more undulating country, and from the crests of the elevations at times a full view of the inlet called the Laco de San Antonio presented itself. 133 484

Smoke was visible ahead, and we accordingly pushed on, and made a long and rapid march, the surface being here altogether free from the small stones which had previously caused so much damage to the horses' feet. That night we halted, as usual, by the side of a lagoon, the water of which was not more than two inches deep.

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

the river. A large troop of horses can scarcely find pasture, and after the rapid journey would not be in a condition for their riders to attack with success, if opposed vigorously by people able to defend themselves.

This district[1] appeared to form a distinct and well-defined limit between the habitats of various animals; as, for instance, the Rhea Darwinii, or smaller ostrich of Patagonia, and the Rhea Americana. The latter, according to my experience, is never found to the south of it, and I am at a loss to understand how Mr. Cunningham could have met with any specimens of it, as he seems to imply.*

The Tehuelches often described the larger Rhea as found north of the travesia, and as distinct from that hunted in their country. They also particularly insisted on the fact that the Gama, or deer—abundant in the Rio Negro valley and the country north of it—is never met with south of the travesia. The same remark is true of the Viscacha and the Aguarra (Lupus manatus), though the latter is probably to be met with in the spurs of the Cordillera.

Patagonia may thus be properly considered as cut off by the Rio Negro and the line of the Cordillera, and possessing its own races and a separate Fauna and Flora.

It may be added that only one species of armadillo, the Quirquincho (Dasypus minutus, Gay), occurs within these limits. The algarroba and other bushes, though found in and near the borders of the travesia, do not occur south of its immediate vicinity.

It was a joyful hour for all when, on the fourth day, after galloping from dawn till ten o'clock, we at length came in sight of the valley, still three miles distant, where large willows—which, by the way, are unknown in Patagonia, save a few at Chupat, probably introduced by the settlers—marked the winding course of the Rio Negro. We halted at the head of an abra, or lateral opening which ran up into the barranca from the main valley, and saw in the

* 'Natural History of the Straits of Magellan,' p. 184.

[1] [i.e. the travesia, or desert -- Analyst]

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

484 distance a solitary rancho, the first civilised dwelling beheld since my departure from Santa Cruz.

After a rest, to enable all to come up, some having lagged behind perforce, their horses being hardly able to limp along, we made our way down the slope, and at length reached the river, in which our thirsty steeds soon drank their fill.

The rancho, which belonged to Hernandez, for whom the convoy of mares was intended, was then visited. The owner was absent, but his Indian wife did the honours, at least as far as serving us with maté, for no food was produced, though all were dreadfully hungry. I wished to stop and don what an American would call my citizen's clothes, thinking that we should immediately proceed to the Guardia I had heard so much of from Luiz Aguirre; but he told me not to be in a hurry, so in my dirty mantle I remained for the present.

After half an hour's delay we left the rancho and followed the south bank of the river, which here was a swift stream 200 yards wide, passing the farm of Hernandez, where a man was occupied in ploughing, and mares and cattle were grazing.
[133] The river here made a bend towards the southern barranca, which so nearly abutted on it as to compel us to ride close along the bank. Small partridges got up frequently, and I made a mental resolution to come and have a day's shooting
[134] at a future period in the magnificent willows bordering the river; blue pigeons were cooing in the trees; and through an opening we caught a glimpse, on the opposite bank, of a well-built, comfortable-looking estancia in the foreground of a wide extent of rich flat land, with corral, galpones, and the usual surroundings, which Luiz Aguirre informed me belonged to Mr. Kincaid. The feeling of having safely emerged from the desert into the settlements put us, though
484 very hungry, into the best of spirits; and after a cheerful
133 half-hour's ride, passing on our road a tumbledown, unused rancho, we arrived at Sauce Blanco, or 'White Willow;'

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

other species of armadillo besides the quirquincho were described as being found in their neighbourhood, but I was not fortunate enough to meet with either description, as they were at this season hybernating. Puma have been killed in the neighbourhood of one of the sheep stations. The shepherd heard two outside the corral on one occasion, and giving chase the puma ascended a small tree. The shepherd was only lightly attired, but he stripped off his shirt and fastened it to a stick planted by the tree, which unknown white object so terrified the 'leones' that they remained quiet while he fetched his gun and shot them both.

The skin of an aguarra killed on the premises was also shown to me, but I had not the good fortune to see one alive. The rarity of the animal causes the skins to be highly valued, being worth £5 each in Carmen.

From the second Guardia a short gallop past the advanced barrancas, near which the river flows in another bend, brings the traveller to another wide plain, which to the north runs up into an abra deeply recessed in the receding barranca: in this there are several farms; one of which, six miles below the Guardia, belonging to Messrs. Fraser and Grenfell, is named the Estancia San André, and is also situated (*i.e.*, the house and parts intended for wheat growing) inside a rincon or corner partitioned off by a good whitethorn or chañal fence, resting at each end in the river. The sheep and cattle graze during the day outside, but the latter and the horses are invariably brought within the enclosure at night for fear of theft. This foresight of enclosing the cattle had saved Mr. Fraser a considerable loss. A short time previous to my visit, a party of maranding Indians rode along outside the fence, and finding nothing but sheep, which travel too slowly to be securely lifted, proceeded to the next estancia, and drove off the cattle and horses, after stripping the shepherd of his clothes, but doing him no bodily injury.

When the news reached Mr. Fraser, he got some men

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

007 together and started in hot pursuit; although a stern chase is a long one, the cattle grew tired, and the Indians, probably some of Calfcura's people, abandoned them, escaping with the horses only.

I passed several days at the Estancia San André, spending the greater part of my time in reading, first the papers, and then all the available books, and now and then sauntering about with a gun to shoot partridges or pigeons, whilst my companions were busy, each with his team of oxen ploughing in the seed, or carting bricks down to the new house in course of completion.

The house we occupied was of adobe, and getting rather into a tumbledown condition; but the new house was a substantial brick building, the bricks burnt by the future occupiers, and the walls run up by some Italian masons. This new house was situated on the extremity of the rincon, or corner, or where its apex touched the river: in front of it was a small island, rapidly undergoing conversion from its original reed-covered state to a fertile garden, in which a good crop of potatoes had already been grown and fruit trees were being planted.

The old house was to be given up to the Capataz, or headman, who then resided with his wife in a portion of it. This man was a native, named Medado; and I have since heard that, when pursuing the Indians who had invaded some stations near Bahia San Blas, he swam the river unaccompanied, and rescued two captives, for which he was made an officer of National Guards. His chief business consisted in looking after the cattle and horses, and training the race-horse, of which Mr. Fraser was justly proud.

During my stay the San André crack was entered against a horse of Linares' over a short course, and won easily, landing stakes of about eighty head of cattle.

136 I noticed, whilst at San André, a very beautiful description of small hawk, which appeared closely allied to our merlin, and shot one specimen.

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

However bare and unpromising the land may seem, such is the fertility of the soil that wheat may be grown, crop after crop, and year after year, on the same land. Potatoes attain a very large size, and are of excellent quality, but these are chiefly grown in the islands of the river.

The Government have lately issued orders that all islands belong inalienably to the State, and all present occupiers are obliged to pay a small head rent to the authorities, which seems to point at future occupation of Choelechel.

Besides potatoes, all other European vegetables and fruit-trees grow well; tobacco seems to thrive, and vines promise to furnish a staple of export in the shape of Rio Negro wine. In one of the islands, occupied by Don Benito Crespo, and leased by him on shares to some Spaniards from the neighbourhood of Cadiz, a great number of vines have been planted and large quantities of grapes pressed out yearly. The wine, which is called 'Chacoli,' has the muscated flavour and bouquet of Moselle, and is a thin pure wine, excellent to drink in the warm weather, as it is by itself not at all strong or heady. I should imagine that it would not bear exportation, but Don Benito has hopes that his Andalusians will shortly be able to produce a superior quality. Besides wine, I tasted at the table of this hospitable gentleman some brandy, the produce of the same grape; it was of course colourless, of good taste, but any number of degrees over proof.

A sportsman can always find amusement either in shooting ducks, partridges, geese, and other wild fowl, or mounting his horse and chasing ostriches or deer in the abras or openings running far up like inlets of grass between the scrub-covered promontories of the barrancas. Fish may be caught in the river, chiefly, I believe, the delicious pejerey,* or large smelt, and those perch-like fish described as existing in the rivers of Patagonia.

For guanaco, the pampas near San Blas must be visited,

* Atherinichthys Argentinensis. Cunningham, p. 54.

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

but the valley and the lagoons formed by backwaters of the river furnish abundance of black-necked swans, upland geese, red-headed ducks, widgeon, teal, flamingoes, and roseate spoonbills. 136

It will be evident that to any active and enterprising young men, prepared to rough it a little, and possessed of a small sum of ready money, who wish to invest in land and cultivate, there is much to be said for and against the Rio Negro as a home. The land may be had at a reasonable price, and little clearing is required. Implements may be brought from Buenos Ayres, either in a sailing ship or by the steamer which is supposed to run monthly, though rather uncertain in its movements. The climate is pleasant and healthy, and one good season of harvest would almost repay the outlay on a moderate establishment.

As to the drawbacks to be placed on the contra side, the river is subject at times to floods, at other times droughts prevail, and, unless artificial irrigation be resorted to, crops will fail, besides which occasionally a million of locusts will save the farmer the trouble of reaping his harvest; the cattle, of which most people keep enough to supply milk and meat for home consumption, may be run off by Indians; and last, but not least, the settler may lose his life by the hand of some felon. But no colony offers a certainty of making a rapid fortune.

The great mistake most English settlers make is going out to a place with the idea they are going to make a "pile" in a year or two, and then return to Europe.

In my opinion the settler should go with the intention of making the place he has chosen his home: then if successful he can return, but he should not look forward to it. The Basque population are looked upon in the Argentine provinces as the best immigrants, as they generally stay in the country. The Italians, on the contrary, grub away for some years, starving and pinching, until they have amassed a small sum of money sufficient to enable them to live at ease in

3: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1872
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

tunity of becoming acquainted with that little-known part of America and its wandering inhabitants.

The name Patagonia is here applied to the country extending from the line of the Rio Negro, about latitude 40 deg. south, to the Straits of Magellan; and is bounded on the east by the Atlantic Ocean, and on the west by the Cordillera of the Andes, although the Chilians, for their own purposes, make the Pacific the western limit. The ordinary notion that this great tract is an inhospitable desert of high barren plains and rocky hills is only correct as applying to portions of the coast line and certain isolated districts of the country. The interior presents abundance of watered valleys, and pasture over which roam countless herds of guanaco and innumerable ostriches, by which name the Rhea Darwinii is generally known. And the numerous horses of the wandering tribes never fail to find food and water.

The Indians (to use the misnomer handed down from the first Spanish discoverers) inhabiting this country are divided into three distinct races, differing in physique and language, and, in some marked respects, in their modes of life. Besides these the Fuegians, or, as the Tehuelches call them, Yamonascunna, though properly inhabitants of Tierra del Fuego, are sometimes found upon the south-west coasts of the mainland; with these I had no intercourse, and their habits have been described by many other travellers, and they are mentioned in order to avoid unnecessary queries.

The Patagonians are called by themselves Aboniconka, or Tehonek, but are more usually known as Tehuelche or Tehuel people, a name probably given them by the Araucanians, and by which they are generally designated. These are divided into northern and southern. The northern generally frequent the district extending from the Santa Cruz river to the Rio Negro. And the southern range over the remainder of the country from the Santa Cruz river to the Straits. These two tribes are however much intermixed, and, as in the case of the party of Indians with whom I travelled, are to be met with hunting and roving in company in all parts of the country; they are, however, distinguishable by dialectical differences in accent, and differ slightly in physique, and in the frequent feuds and quarrels they display as much hostility as if they were distinct races.

The second race of natives is usually known as the Pampas or Penck, whose district lies between the Chupat river and the Rio Negro; these are an offshoot of the Pampas Indians of the plains north of the Rio Negro, having their head-quarters at Las Salinas near Bahia Blanca. They speak a distinct language, somewhat similar to, but not identical with, that of the Araucanos, and are notably different in physique and feature from the Tehuelche.

4: Lothrop A-4 (no date) 1929
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

History, the United States National Museum, and the Peabody Museum of Harvard University.

In regard to the material preferred by the Tehuelche for their robes, Father Falkner[6] writes:

> Those made with the skins of young colts and mares are the least valuable. The mantles made of the skins of a small, stinking animal, like our polecat, which they call yaguane, are superior to these last. . . .
>
> The fur of the coipu, or otter, is in equal esteem with that of the yaguane, or mulkel. . . .
>
> The mantles made of the skins of guanaco are in still greater estimation than those before-mentioned, on account of the warmth and fineness of their wool, and their long duration. But those which are in the highest esteem of all are made with the skins of small foxes, which are exceedingly soft and beautiful. They are of a mottled grey, with a red cast, but not so durable as those of the guanaco.

On this subject Musters[7] writes:

> Besides the guanaco mantles which are most generally worn, others are made from the skins of the fox, puma, wild cat, cavy, and skunk; the fur of the latter and of the wild cat being the most valuable, but like the others, are generally intended only for barter.

In addition, the present writer has seen several mantles of ostrich-skins from Patagonia. While these have undoubtedly been made by the Indians and exhibit characteristic indigenous sewing, yet it is exceedingly doubtful that they were ever used locally. On the contrary, it appears that they were manufactured merely in order to trade with white settlers.

A considerable variety of furs, then, were used on occasion in Tehuelche robes, but in most cases the guanaco was selected. This wild relative of the llama, one of the four New World camels, has been most succinctly described by the friend of Capt. Musters[8] who exclaimed that it contained "the neigh of a horse, the wool of a sheep, the neck of a camel, the feet of a deer, and the swiftness of the devil." We shall examine the methods of hunting guanaco and the weapons employed.

When first encountered by Europeans the Tehuelche armed themselves with bows and arrows. Their bows apparently were not like those of the Ona, for they are described as short and stiff.[9] After

[6] 1774, p. 108.
[7] 1871, p. 180.
[8] Ibid., p. 197.
[9] Oviedo, lib. xx, cap. vi.

5: Bourne T-5 (1849) 1874
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

088 through which I passed were viewed with a calmness that had been before unattainable, and which is now scarcely credible, on recollection. So true is it that our strength is unknown to ourselves till it is thoroughly tested.

The hope of immediate release, however, was at an end: my savage captors, it seemed, must be looked upon as for an indefinite period my masters and companions; and I had nothing at present to do but to divert myself by a study of their manners and habits; to commit my safety by a close study of their character, and of the ways and means by which so to adapt my deportment to it as to win their confidence, to disarm hostility, and to seize opportunities.

133 Patagonia, as it offered itself to my observation, more than answered the descriptions of geographers, — bleak, barren, desolate, beyond description or conception, — only to be appreciated by being seen. Viewed from the Straits of Magellan, it rises in gentle undulations or terraces. Far as the eye can reach, in a westerly direction, it assumes a more broken and hilly appearance, and long ranges of mountains, extending from north to south, divide the eastern [34] from the western shore. The soil is of a light, sandy character, and bears nothing worthy the name of a tree. Low [37] bushes, or underwood, are tolerably abundant, and in the valleys a coarse, wiry grass grows luxuriantly. Streams [32] of water are rare. The natives draw their supplies principally from springs or pools in the valleys, the water of which is generally brackish and disagreeable.

•131 The variety of animal is nearly as limited as that of vegetable productions. The guanaco, a quadruped allied to the lama, and with some resemblance to the camelopard,

5: Bourne T-5 (1849)1874
SHS Tehuelche SHS

is found in considerable numbers. It is larger than the red deer, feet on the feet, usually found in large herds, frequenting not only the plains, but found along the course of the Andes. Its flesh is a principal article of food; its skin is dried with the hair on, in such a manner that, when wet, it retains its pliability and softness. This process of preserving skins seems to be peculiar to the Indian tribes, and is not unlike that by which buffalo-robes, bear-skins, jackskins, and other articles of luxury, and even necessity, among us, are prepared by the North American Indians. Guanaco-skins are cut into pieces of all sizes, and sewed into a thousand fanciful patterns, every workman originating a style to suit himself. The heads are sometimes turned to account by the natives as mats for shoes, when they indulge in such a luxury, which is not often.

The enemy of the guanaco is the cougar, or "American lion," smaller than its African namesake, and more resembling the tiger in his character and habits, having a smooth, sleek coat, of a brownish yellow color,—altogether a very beautiful but ferocious creature. His chase is a favorite, though rare and dangerous, sport of the natives. Patagonia likewise boasts of the skunk, whose flesh is used for food. There are also foxes, and innumerable mice. Of birds, the only noticeable varieties are the condor, in the Andes, and the ostrich, a species of ostrich, smaller than that of Africa, on the plains; its plumage is not abundant, generally of a gray or dun color. Its flesh is tender and sweet, and with the fat much prized by the Indians. Like the African ostrich, it is exceedingly swift, only to be captured on horseback, and often fleet enough to outrun the fastest racer.

5: Bourne T-5 (1849)1874
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

purpose, till I got so tired of my showman's duty that I wished the watch in the bottom of the sea. The Indians, as they listened to its vibrations, would stand in every attitude of silent amazement, their eyes dilated, their countenances lighted up in every feature with delighted wonder and then break out in a roar of hoarse laughter, the tone of which strangely contrasted with the infantile simplicity of their demeanor. The business was dreadfully annoying, and yet it was plain that a new and almost unbounded power affecting my destiny was hidden in that little machine. It had captivated the chief, and struck an awe over the tribe like the rod of an enchanter. Whether it boded good or evil, was another question.

Our next move took us in a west-north-west direction, and in our progress we not only secured abundant game of the ordinary varieties, but encountered and killed a young lion, — to use the popular term, — the first living specimen I had seen in the country. I had seen their skins in possession of the Indians, and heard stories of their chase. This was a youthful creature, about the size of a well-grown calf of six weeks. I was riding side by side with the chief across a piece of low bushy land, when the dogs gave token that they scented something uncommon. We halted, and the chief cried out to the dogs, "Chew! Chew!" They were off in a jiffey, rushing hither and thither through the bushes, barking furiously, and soon drove the beast from his covert. Other Indians, a little distance off, ascertaining what was in the wind, made after the game with a reinforcement of dogs. The chase began in good earnest. Horses, riders and dogs, from all points of the compass, were scampering to the scene of action, hal-

5: Bourne T-5 (1849)1874
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

Nothing of importance occured at our encampment near the lakes, except — what was a very noteworthy fact with me — such an abundance of ostrich that I was surfeited with the delicious fare, and was compelled by the chief to take a horse-rein emetic, — a more precise description of which the reader will have no difficulty in excusing. Had I not so completely disavowed the medical character, the chief might probably have allowed me to feel my own pulse, — if I could find it, — and to prescribe for myself; but the renunciation of professional honors brought me under the sanitary, as well as the political, jurisdiction of Parosilver.

Our line of march was now in a northerly direction, soon deflecting to the eastward, — a movement that revived my sinking hopes. There seemed to be some prospect of striking the Atlantic coast, and coming within reach of civilized men. On our way we observed the tracks of some animals different from any I had met with. The chief said it was the *limerer*, with which lucid definition I was fain to be content; and, as no specimens were visible, the inquisitive naturalist must trust to his imagination for the rest.

5: Bourne T-5 (1849)1874
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

night in commending myself to the mercy and good providence of God, praying that he would soften the heart of the savage and open a way of deliverance.

Among other matters that excited my curiosity, I was anxious to know whether the Indians were expert swimmers. The only occasion on which I had seen them attempt it was at the time of the accident in crossing the river. Then two of them swam across, while the others floated on their horses' backs, clinging to the mane. In answer to some questions dropped on the subject, the chief assured me that they were all expert swimmers, and could stretch off a long distance without resting, as they would show me, but that the coldness of the season made the experiment too unpleasant. Others of the tribe told the same story. The question was interesting, for obvious reasons. I had thought a time might come when it would be a very practical one.

Some new specimens of birds made their appearance from time to time. One was a large black bird, resembling the turkey-buzzard, and subsisting on carrion. Another resembled the snow-birds of the north. I had also seen, near the sea-shore and by the lakes, several species of water-fowl, — one not unlike the wild goose, but the chief said they were not good for food.

Our course, the next day, was northward, and the day following turned once more decidedly towards the east, whereat my hopes, varying with the compass, began to revive, though their buoyancy was tempered by experience of the uncertainty of Indian movements. Observing a spot covered with small trees, over which a great number of carrion birds hovered, we approached and found the carcass of a poor old guanaco, which had most likely paid the debt of

DESCRIPTION OF THE SOUTHERN COAST OF THAT REGION OF THE SOUTH COMMONLY CALLED PATAGONIA

133 The harbor of Santa Elena is a good one for all types of ships and is situated on the 40° line of southern latitude. Sweet water is to be found only in a glade to the west, filled by the winter rains as they are held by [312] a ridge which lies across the glade's mouth near the beach. Inland, some four or five leagues, the Indians reported the presence of some small [137] springs. All the terrain is rocky except for the small valleys, in which 313] there is good grass and an abundance of espinillo firewood. The Indian [221] chief who rules this section is called Ayzo; his jurisdiction stretches up to the harbor of San Gregorio. He said that from the coast westward toward the mountains there are some 70 leagues of habitable land, but the land beyond that limit is absolutely uninhabitable by man or beast. ● 136 Hares are very abundant here, being like small antelope and very good to eat; quirquinchos, [type of armadillo--Translator] also good eating, [115] have shells which the Indians use as pans or plates; pumas have flesh which is very savory, juicy and tender, and is like the roasted breast of a turkey; there are a few guanacos too, some partridges and many [262] ostriches. The Indians subsist on all of these, as also on horse meat, which they have in great abundance and which is their favorite food. Fish, in which the harbor abounds, is of the kind which we call borriquete and pejerey, both of which are delicious.

133 The harbor of San Gregorio is situated at 45° 4' latitude south. It is not very secure and its entrance is bad owing to its rock strewn bottom and weak anchorage. The terrain which surrounds it is rocky and rugged; one must go inland some 5 leagues [65] before striking water. The mountain chain is about as far from this harbor as it is from that of [134] Santa Elena, according to the Indians. This land is even more sterile [622] than the former. The Indian chief who controls these lands is called 136 Gorgona. The game and fish are the same as in the previous place but [226] the Indians do not eat the fish since they do not know how to catch them and lack the necessary implements for doing so. In the cove called Camarones there is an abundance of shrimp, as there is also in San Julian and Puerto Deseado, and a kind of fish called gallo; but as already mentioned, the Indians do not make use of them. There is here quite a lot [313] of espinillo firewood, and the rock is very solid and hard.

133 The gulf of San Jose is south of cape Matas, which is at the same latitude as San Gregorio; from the point at which its mouth begins to cape Blanco, there are 50 leagues. The northern shores have been explored by small ships to a point about 40 leagues to the west. There are

133 many havens there, protected by numerous islands and sandbanks. The coast is not as high, but the land is even more barren than that of the other harbors, there being neither water nor grass, although firewood is not altogether lacking, especially inland. The Indians said that the gulf continues toward the west almost up to the mountains, that some springs flow into it there and that it is impossible to cross the mountains to the other side. They added that there is much espinillo brushwood in the region, going from north to south, through which they have cut paths in order to get through, and should they ever deviate from these paths, they become lost. The southern shores of the gulf, they say, are more arid than the northern, but the fauna is the same as in the others. The Indian chiefs who rule this territory are two brothers, called Chaiguas and Enis.

Puerto Deseado is situated at 47° 48' of southern latitude; it is a good harbor but of difficult entry because of the narrowness of its mouth and the violence of the currents which flow in it. The coast is very high and craggy; there is firewood and in the gullies there are some small springs of sweet but slightly brackish water, some 14 in all, which can take care of any need. Game is the same as it was in the other parts: there are innumerable sea lions and seals and an abundance of guanacos. The chief who controls these lands is called Ulquiquenque; he said that the mountain chain is about 20 "sleeps" from the harbor, which must be about 70 leagues, and also that it is impossible to cross over to the other side, that his people have never crossed nor seen other Indians cross the mountains. In this district there is white, black, red and other colored rock, and a little marble in small broken pieces. [66] The earth also is of various colors and the Indians use it to make their paints. There are also many seals and sea lions on the islands in the haven.

The harbor of San Julian is located at 49° 21' of southern latitude and is the best on the coast, although the entrance to it is difficult for an unpracticed person because of the bank at its mouth and two others which are inside. The terrain also is the best on the whole coast, not at all rocky and more fertile, as we found out when we were there the three years which the settlement lasted from 1781 to 1784 [sic]. The closest source of water is about a league from the beach, and is made up of some wells filled by the overflow from a spring which lies about a league and a half away. There is ample firewood in all the dells, all of which also abound in grass and water, the terrain being made up almost entirely of such gullies, and of stoneless hills. The mountain chain is 70 leagues away toward the west, and at its base there are three cove-like depressions in each of which there is a lake fed by the snow which melts on the mountain tops. I explored this region at the foot of the mountains

entirely and could find no pass, it being impossible even for the animals to cross over to the other side, all passages being closed off by snow most of which has frozen solid and is, as it were, petrified. This finding made plausible the assertion which the Indians make to the effect that they have never crossed the mountains here or in any of the other places already named. From the first of the three lakes mentioned there flows a small river which runs into the haven of Santa Cruz; from the second, located to the south of the first, springs the stream which the Indians call Chalia, which flows into the Rio Grande de Santa Cruz; the last and southernmost of the three lakes gives birth to the Rio Grande de Santa Cruz, which flows into the haven of the same name, situated at 50° 12' of southern latitude. The chief who lives in this district, which comprises the land between Puerto Deseado and the Rio de Santa Cruz [sic], is called Camelo, and we called him Julian. He is one of the chiefs with the largest following in his nation; his lieutenant is a son-in-law of his called Onos, and he lives in the vicinity of the Santa Cruz lakes.

Fifteen leagues from the Santa Cruz river there is another stream, fed by the mountain snows, which runs in that area and turns toward the Straits of Magellan. This stream flows into the cove named Gallegos and is not navigable, reports of other ancient travelers to the contrary. At 52° of southern latitude is the Cabo de las Virgenes, and the Straits of Magellan start there. The mountains come down so close to the very Straits, at its mid point, that even here it is impossible to reach [67] the other side by land. There are here a number of small snow-fed streams, an abundance of firewood and good grasslands which support the infinite number of guanacos that live in the region. The Indian chief who governs these lands is called Coopan. He is one of those having the largest following, but all his people travel on foot, the tents and small belongings being transported by dogs. Only the chief and his women have horses, which are supplied to them by their neighbor Camelo, chief of San Julian. This state of affairs has existed for some years, in fact since Camelo invaded this territory and took away all the horses. Since the invasion it has been his policy to supply chief Coopan and his wives with horses, but no one else, and in this way he is able to keep his southern neighbors under his control. Horseless, they hunt guanacos on foot, and as there are many of these animals they are able to live pretty well in this territory. In Puerto Deseado and in San Julian a good many of these animals also live, yet not as many, and there the Indians can hunt them with greater ease since they have horses; but then again, the Indians here in the more southern part who lack horses are themselves more agile and robust. In

136 all the harbors of this coast there is an abundance of birds: both seabirds and amphibious ones, such as ducks, seagulls, cormorants, chorlitos, bandurrias, some abutardas and pajaros-niños; there are also some swans, and inland there are partridges, sparrows and some dark colored birds with red breasts; there are also vultures and all kinds of birds of prey. Foxes and black-and-white skunks abound, the urine which the latter give off having the most vile smelling odor imaginable, extending over an enormous area. From the Santa Cruz river south to the Straits there are a few deer.

132 The climate here is cold, but it keeps to a regular seasonal cycle; it rains but little. The winds usually blow from the north, west or south, and are ordinarily violent and make the region uncomfortable, but they are very healthful.

[49] The Indians in these quarters are all of one nation; they are tall,
142 their height varying from six feet to nine spans for the men, there rarely being any taller than this. The women are not so tall, but are enough so in proportion to their sex. All are handsome, and among the women there are some who are very good-looking and white skinned, although tanned by the wind and sun like the men. There is not to be found a thin man or woman, rather are they all thick-set in proportion to their height, which, combined with their habit of going about enveloped in skins from neck to feet, may possibly have contributed to the reports of travelers that they were giants.

[94] Their language is guttural and they are in the habit of repeating
195 the same word over and over in their conversations. They do not inter-
537 rupt the one who may be speaking even though [68] his speech lasts all day. Ordinarily the speaker is one of greater authority than the others
[562] present, or else of greater eloquence. The women do not speak among the men unless questioned, and then they only answer the question. Those who speak often without occasion and inanely are not well considered, and are not even listened to.

391 The dress of the men is made of guanaco, skunk or hare skins, six
[63] feet square, the fur turned inward and the hide painted red, green or yellow. This garment covers them from neck to feet in such a way that only rarely does one see any part of the body other than the arms, and these only when they are in use. They wear also another garment under the outer one, of very soft leather, tied at the waist with a thong, which covers the belly and reaches halfway down the thighs, from which place it tapers to a point which reaches as far as the ankles. Their feet are covered with hide which they secure with thongs; this footgear is of ox hide if they can procure it, and if not, then of the hide of a horse or of a full-grown

[i.e., ca. six feet nine inches. - Analyst]